PRESS CONFERENCES

of

THE PRESIDENT

1941 -- Jan. 1 to June 30

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Official Reporters

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #706,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 3, 1941, 11.38 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning!

Q Good morning, Mr. President!

THE PRESIDENT: Where's the big boy?

MR. REYNOLDS: He decided he better go up to the Hill this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Sit down, yourself.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you!

THE PRESIDENT: I think you rate it.

Q He's been sitting down all the morning, Mr. President!

THE PRESIDENT: Been sitting down all the morning?

MR. REYNOLDS: Yes, but I had a hard night, though. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: There are only two things I can think of; one is that because it is perfectly obvious that so much tonnage in the way of ships has been going to the bottom for a year and a half, probably at the end of the war, sooner or later, there will be a shortage -- a world shortage -- of tonnage, and therefore we have begun taking the first steps toward a program of building about 200 merchant ships -- a program which will cost somewhere around $300,000,000., between $300,000,000. and $350,000,000., in a number of new plants. This is on the general theory that there has been a tremendous expansion, as you all know, in existing shipbuilding plants, and the time seems to have come when it is advisable to create some new plants; and toward that program, in order to get started, I have taken $36,000,000. out of the President's Special Contract Authorization Fund. The other thing -- I don't think

of anything else on that that's not an "if" question -- and in addition to that I expect next week to send to the Senate a name for Ambassador to Great Britain; but in the meantime I am asking Harry Hopkins to go over as my personal representative for a very short trip to the other side, just to maintain -- I suppose that is the best word for it -- personal contact between me and the British Government. He would only be over there a couple of weeks and then come back here.

Q Does Mr. Hopkins have any special mission, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no!

Q Any title?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no!

Q Is that $300,000,000. to be for constructing new yards, or actual construction of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Actual construction.

Q Where will the majority of the new yards be?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought I would not bring that subject up, because if I were to say now one were to go to the State of X and another to the State of Y, they would at once try to get them away.

Q How will the new shipbuilding yards be financed?

THE PRESIDENT: Out of this $36,000,000. Some of you older people remember a place called Squantum in 1917 that I built on the marshes between Boston and Fall River, near Quincy, Massachusetts. Actually, the shipyard itself cost very little, because it was more a question of driving a lot of piles for the ways and putting a nice tin shed over the ways and putting in some light construction shops. It is not an expensive type of plant for this type of ship.

Q Will this work be done entirely by existing shipbuilding companies?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily, no.

Q Will the Government own the ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that is a question of working it out.

Q One more question; you may not wish to answer it, but I am interested in the old Morris Shipbuilding Company in Connecticut.

THE PRESIDENT: I honestly don't know. There was some talk of reviving them when we were up there in New London. We went right by the old Morris plant; but whether there is enough salvage material there or enough labor supply, I don't know.

Q Are there others of the old World War plants that are in the same condition? I have in mind Hog Island.

THE PRESIDENT: At Hog Island there is nothing left. There is an old plant that was running in World War days on the Hudson River, at Newburgh. Some of the piling and docks have rotted away; the buildings are still there. That is being studied, whether it is worth while to rehabilitate them.

Q How long does it take, generally speaking, to build one of those shipyards?

THE PRESIDENT: I hate to be categorical on that. Suppose you figure it out this way, that we ought to get ships inside of a year.

Q Mr. President, would this program of 200 ships make it possible for us to release other ships just coming off the ways for the British?

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I remarked about a while ago -- that "if" questions are not very good.

Q Mr. President, is the Maritime Commission supervising this?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What design of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Anyone of you that knows a ship and loves a ship would hate

them, as I do. In other words, they are the type of ship that is built by the yard or the foot. Nobody that loves ships can be very proud of them; but it gets them out, and the difference, roughly speaking, in time between building a ship that is built like a square, oblong tank and a ship that is really a ship is six or eight months. In other words, by building this dreadful looking object you save six or eight months.

Q Why not give them to the British? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, when is Mr. Hopkins going to London?

THE PRESIDENT: Very soon.

Q What is the total tonnage of these ships involved, could you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- I may not be exactly correct -- I think, roughly, about 7500 tons each.

Q Mr. President, will there be any prefabrication of parts?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we'll do all we can in the steel plant and have the shipyard itself, as much as possible, merely an assembly plant.

Q Will the specifications, sir, prevent the building of many of these ships on the Great Lakes?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Will consideration be given to construction in places where the Government already owns property?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot think of any such place.

Q We mentioned Hog Island; the Government still holds a large amount of land there.

THE PRESIDENT: There are other considerations -- labor supply and things of that kind.

Q Have we sufficient skilled labor to build them?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably so.

Q There will not be any training programs for this, will there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, like everything else; we are training people for all kinds of things. I think NYA alone, as a Government proposition, is training about 300,000 people at this moment. In addition to that, you have a great many people that are being trained under the supervision of labor unions; you have an enormous number of people being trained in private plants. The total is very large.

Q Mr. President, in connection with the ships, there was a morning story in London suggesting that we were going to give more ships to Britain.

THE PRESIDENT: A morning-paper story?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what it sounds like. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, with regard to Mr. Hopkins, you said he was going over as personal representative; will he have a status of ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he has no status at all; he is going over as my representative. The question of title doesn't enter into it.

Q You said next week you would name the new ambassador; does that mean a name has been submitted?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, is it safe to say Mr. Hopkins will not be the next Ambassador

THE PRESIDENT: You know Harry isn't strong enough for that job.

Q Will he be on the Government pay roll?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose they will pay his expenses -- probably a per diem, not very large -- either for you or Hopkins! (Laughter)

Q Has the date of his departure been fixed?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Has Mr. Kennedy's resignation become effective?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Will it be effective on Mr. Hopkins' going over?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will anyone accompany Mr. Hopkins?

THE PRESIDENT: No. And he will have no powers.

Q Will he have any mission to perform?

THE PRESIDENT: No; you can't get anything exciting. (Laughter) He's just going over to say "How do you do?" to a lot of my friends! (Laughter)

Q When can we say this shipbuilding program will get under way?

THE PRESIDENT: You better ask the Maritime Commission; the allocation has been made.

Q Mr. President, there have been some conflicting reports on the St. Lawrence Waterway; one is about your sending a treaty up to the Senate.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet; I am still talking it over -- forgot to this morning.

Q There have been several stories out of Mexico stating that there is a destroyer arrangement.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid that's a Mexican story.

Q There have been some unofficial complaints from Sweden about your reference Sunday night to the fact that they were sending materials to Germany.

THE PRESIDENT: I'll give you something -- off the record. This is what happened: In the draft -- No. 6 draft, I think it was -- I had it worded in such a way that it took half a page -- half a typewritten page. This is off the record; it has to be. You see how these things happen. I had explained that Sweden, under a form of duress -- that is the word I used originally, which would be certainly true -- was sending

iron, steel, and oil into Germany every day. It was perfectly true; it was a form of duress. I went on and I said, in the case of Rumania, it was oil, and it is again a form of duress. I came to the case of Russia; well, that probably is not duress; that is a question of Russian policy, because they are an awfully big country, and I left out the word "duress" in the case of Russia. And then I bumped into the awful problem of what is the status of supplies going into Germany from Yugoslavia; is that duress or not? I got so involved in trying to explain the status of supplies going to Germany from different nations near Germany, and I needed to save space anyway, so I put it all into one sentence and left out what the reason was behind the supplies going in. Of course the reason differs in almost every country. I just lumped it and called it "Sweden, Russia, and other nations near Germany"; and the fact remains that the supplies are going in. So that is what happened; that is the story of the sentence.

Q Mr. President, do you consider that the steel supply -- the present steel supply -- is adequate for the shipbuilding program?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. In other words, you know perfectly well on this question of this, that, and the other shortage, taking steel for instance, that we got the very best advice we could on steel way back, when was it? -- last autumn, from people who know steel, and we don't. They said that there were ample steel production facilities in the United States. We told them, "Hold on, now, you may have more steel to turn out -- plates, ships, et cetera -- than you think". They said, "We still think we have ample."

This went on until October or November. It wasn't their fault, but the program itself developed faster than they thought, and in November I insisted that they review the whole situation, and then they came to

A-B 8-10-56

believe that additional steel production was necessary, and since then they have picked up. For instance, Tennessee Coal and Iron is putting in 400,000 tons; Bethlehem is putting in 800,000, and they are adding another 800,000 for our glass [blast?] furnaces and things like that; so probably the production has been increased about 2,000,000 tons of steel a year. I think on this --

Q (interposing) Beginning when? It takes 18 months to build a [blast?] glass furnace.

THE PRESIDENT: That is a thing I am trying to cut. In this we probably have enough to turn out the ships and plates. It is very simple work. On the general question whether we will have to increase steel production facilities, I expect a report within two or three days, and it looks as if we would have to increase the facilities.

Q Would you say a word on what the circumstances were that brought about the suspension of work on the naval bases leased from Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q On suspension of the 8-hour day for Government workers working on the four naval bases leased from Britain. It was announced that you would release an Executive Order in the Federal Register this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: You know, on those bases we are employing almost entirely local labor, and it is in order to conform with the work situation in whichever colony it may happen to be in, paying the type of going scale in that colony -- the type of the going scale in wages and the minimum of the average hours -- put it that way.

Q Is it logical to assume that Great Britain will benefit either directly or indirectly from this program?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say it would depend entirely on where it is. If you take one of those little islands --

Q (interposing) Pardon me, I meant the shipbuilding program.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't the faintest idea. That is another "if" question.

Q The retiring president of the National Association of Manufacturers has asked that the Government make known whether it will revise contracts so they can pay time and a half or double time.

THE PRESIDENT: That sounds like a political question; it is so general it means nothing. If you will specify, I will give an answer.

Q That's all.

Q Mr. President, you didn't send up appointments for the Governor of Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands to this Congress; is there any reason for submitting it to the next Congress instead?

THE PRESIDENT: They were pretty crowded at the end. They talked a long time about the Madden nomination.

Q Going up Monday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #707 - Budget,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 7, 1941, 11.35 A.M.

(Hon. Harold D. Smith, Director of the Budget, and Mr. John B. Blandford, Assistant Director, were present at this Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: You might almost think this is a general Press Conference, because I see so many people that don't know the difference between a dollar and a dime. (Laughter)

Q Is there any, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Very little!

Q Only the matter of the zero.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have got two people here (referring to Mr. Smith and Mr. Blandford) that will be able to go into more details for you than I can. The general idea, I suppose, is best explained by going through the Message itself; then if you have any questions to come up at the time, go ahead and ask them.

Of course this Budget is caused entirely -- the size of it -- by the world situation.

Page V is the first page of the Budget Message -- another dissertation on the state of the world and the reason for the program.

On page VI, "The National Program," it says this Budget I am presenting covers the whole thing to combine these objectives; in other words, to keep going and at the same time prepare ourselves against world dangers. The program will cost about 17.5 billions of dollars. In the same period, we expect the largest national income for the Nation as a whole and also the largest tax receipts. Of course those are two

entirely different things, for the kindergarten pupils here. The national income will be up, we hope, this coming year. Is it in the Budget what we hope it will be up to?

MR. SMITH: No.

THE PRESIDENT: During this fiscal year -- is it the fiscal year we talk about? -- no, in the calendar year that is just ended, I don't know whether the figures have been given out or not, but it will be somewhere around 73 billion dollars, and for the calendar year 1941 that we are in, we hope it will run as high as 80.

MR. SMITH: Mr. President, for the fiscal year, on which most of the calculations have been made, the estimates, of course, vary but range between 86, 87, or 88, -- the top figures for the national income for the fiscal year.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, if you take 1941 as calendar year, it will probably run 80 or 81, but if you take the fiscal year from next July to 1942, we think it will run a good deal higher than that -- as Harold (Mr. Smith) says, around 86 or 87, pushing it up by six months.

Q Mr. President, will that be the largest in history?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it will. I think '29 -- whether it was the calendar year '29 or the fiscal year '30 I don't remember -- but as I remember the figures, it was just a little over 80.

Q Will there be increased taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course it depends on whether you mean the present tax base or whether you would include possible increased taxes.

MR. SMITH: There is a point of difference that might be confusing; the Treasury statement has an estimate of tax revenue, I think, of 9.6, based upon the national income that they indicate. We have another esti-

mate of revenue. Their estimate is on tax liability, whereas there is a lag in the collection of taxes. They have made their estimate on the basis of tax liability for the particular period rather than on actual tax payments.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (Reading)

> "In addition to, but essentially and rightly as a complement to this program, the time has come for immediate consideration of assuring the continuation of the flow of vitally necessary munitions to those nations which are defending themselves against attack and against the imposition of new forms of government upon them."

In other words, that is in addition to this Budget.

Q I notice, Mr. President, it doesn't mention round figures; do you have any idea how much more that will be, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't know yet.

Q Nothing that you mention here is in this Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: In that paragraph, nothing is Budget.

Q Mr. President, in connection with that supplemental program, will many of those millions be added under fiscal year 1942?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on whether you mean obligations or actual money out of the treasury.

Q Disbursements.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we can figure it out roughly from our own program; some will be money out of the treasury, and some obligations.

Q Do you not expect to budget that additional expenditure very soon?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I can't give you that yet.

Q Is the plan anywhere near ready?

THE PRESIDENT: They are working on it now.

Q In addition to the 17.5 billion, there will be a supplemental Message?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You are not considering some of the appropriations for any help to Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q This will be entirely different from the National Defense Program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, remembering always, as you and I know, that the future of the world needs can change awfully fast. As I said yesterday, in the Message, we have to remember that the things that would be built for the democracies are nearly all of them available for our own defense.

Q Mr. President, that is broad enough to include Greece and China, I take it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q This is a tentative Budget, as it is now?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is <u>not</u> a tentative Budget; it is <u>the</u> Budget.

Q It doesn't take into consideration those other expenditures.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that depends on legislation.

Q Is there any estimate as to the amount added for this fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You will ask immediate consideration of a deficiency appropriation and make these funds available for British purchases?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether you will call it a deficiency or a separate appropriation bill. What it will be, will be asking for more money.

Q Mr. President, won't the British continue paying cash for some time?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes! My, yes!

Q Well into this fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, you expected that day you spoke of the lend-lease plan that it would take place in this fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: Some of it, yes.

Q One other question, Mr. President, please: Does this 17 billion and aid for England -- does that contemplate drawing off supplies paid for out of the 17.5 billion for Army and Navy -- does this contemplate drawing off any of those supplies for England?

THE PRESIDENT: No, this is our program.

MR. SMITH: There may be a point of confusion in this way, that this Budget -- any Budget -- has to be made up on the basis of existing law.

THE PRESIDENT: This is made up under existing law -- that is your point. I can't put in any new request for funds to build ships or planes, and so forth and so on, on the loan program until I get the legislation for the loan program. (Reading)

> "Such a complementary program would call for appropriations and contract authorizations over and above this Budget."

That sentence does it. (Continued reading)

> "The sum of all these defense efforts should be geared to the productive capacity of this Nation expanded to literally its utmost efforts."

Putting it a different way, the productive capacity of the Nation, running at top speed -- utmost efforts -- is really the criterion of appropriations and authorizations. There is no use to get appropriations and authorizations for things that are beyond that utmost capacity. In other words, to put it still a different way, they are going to ask for enough money and authorizations to contract up to the limit of what we can produce, because the world situation calls for that today. What that total figure is, I can't tell you now, because it is a developing matter. We are learning more and more all the time. For instance, this question -- I will just cite a very simple example -- this question of either building airplanes or building ships; I told you the

other day about 200 ships; immediately there comes up the question, "Have we got enough skilled labor, semi-skilled labor, riveters, and so forth and so on -- common labor and high-class labor -- to build 200 ships?" Yes, we think we have. If the need is such that we would have to build 200 more, we would have to check up on that problem. I don't know; none of us know -- except the columnists! (Laughter) You know what I mean.

Then take the question of airplanes; various needs are being given a regular combing -- a going over. You have various suggestions to add to the total output of airplanes, over and above the present program, not merely to speed up that program but also to increase the total of the program. Well, that involves all kinds of things that no one of us knows the answer to -- except the columnists! (Laughter)

Can we get something out of the suggestion that was made by the CIO people out in Detroit the other day? Yes, probably we can.

Can we recomb the small factories in the United States and get certain parts? You know I always think in local terms; can we get certain parts of airplanes made by comparatively small concerns? Take, on the Hudson River, the De Laval Cream Separator Company; if you know anything about a cream separator, you know it is a tricky thing to make. It takes a good deal of skill to make parts for a cream separator. We may be able to get that kind of factory to make certain parts for an additional airplane program.

Down in Newburgh there is the old Caldwell Lawn Mower Company; well, maybe they can do something.

So we are engaged at the present time in combing over all the small, local industries that might be able to make one little part for addi-

tional airplanes. And we learn by experience; we probably will know a great deal more about it in 60 or 90 days than we do today. The program is geared to the utmost effort possible. What the total means in dollars and cents, none of us have any idea. (Reading)

"THE DEFENSE PROGRAM AND DEFENSE EXPENDITURES

"Sixty-two percent of the expenditures proposed in this Budget are for national defense. No one can predict the ultimate cost of a program that is still in development, for no one can define the future. When we recall the staggering changes in the world situation in the last six months, we realize how tentative all present estimates must be."

We have on the books 18 and are asking for 10 more.

Q Mr. President, does that mean total contracts and authorizations during this period, or the actual outlay of cash?

THE PRESIDENT: What is your question?

Q Does that mean total expenditures on contracts and authorizations during that period, or does it mean actual outlay?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it doesn't mean cash outlay. It means things that have been appropriated for, most of which have already been let out by contract. Out of not quite 12 billion that we have been working on in our figures up to the present time, we have already let since -- what? -- since last July, over 10; and that doesn't mean "on order"; that means -- of course that's a purely political attempt to make "on order" appear that the thing is not in process; they are things that have been let.

Q Twenty-eight billion?

MR. SMITH: The table below answers that.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

"These expenditures must be seen as a part of a defense program stretching over several years. On the basis of the appropriations and authorizations enacted for national defense from June 1940 up to the present time,--"

six months

"--plus the recommendations for supplementary appropriations and authorizations for 1941--"

that is still this fiscal year

"--and the recommendations contained in this Budget for 1942, we have a program of 28 billion dollars."

In other words, break that down a little bit, Harold (Mr. Smith).

"This is a vast sum, difficult to visualize in terms of work actually to be done. If we can prove that we are able to organize and execute such a gigantic program in a democratic way, we shall have made a positive contribution in a world in which the work-ability of democracy is challenged.

"This defense program is summarized below:"

These, as Harold says, are appropriations and authorizations that have been made up to the present time, and recommendations of changes in this.

"Appropriations, authorizations, and recommendations (June 1940, 1941, 1942) (In millions of dollars)

"Army	$13,704
Navy	11,587
Expansion of industrial plant	1,902
Other defense activities	1,287
Total	28,480"

Q What percentage of the 10 billion you are asking for, Mr. President, is authorizations?

THE PRESIDENT: That I could not tell you.

MR. SMITH: We will have to check up on that; I can't give you that, offhand.

Q Can you tell us what percentage is for new employment and what percentage is for maintenance of existing Army and Navy and payment of soldiers?

THE PRESIDENT: (Turning to Mr. Smith) What table is that in? Do you have that?

MR. SMITH: We would have to do some reconstructing, Mr. President, to get that out.

THE PRESIDENT: We never worked out a table for that --

MR. SMITH: (interposing) A81, Contracts.

THE PRESIDENT: A81, down there, is a recapitulation of contract authorizations. If you can make head or tail out of that, you are good.

Q I am afraid I can't.

THE PRESIDENT: I can't either. (Reading)

> "The Army funds provide for the training and maintenance of a force of men increasing from 250,000 in June 1940 to 1,400,000 in 1942, equipped with the most modern devices of motorized and mechanical warfare. The Navy estimates continue the construction of our over-all Navy and contemplate the doubling of naval personnel. There is provision for a great increase in the number of Army and Navy planes and for training pilots, technicians, and ground crews.
>
> "Behind the lines a whole new defense industry is being built--" (omitting rest of sentence)
> "One hundred and twenty-five new plants are under contract; more are planned."

Nearly all of these plants, of course, are pretty big plants and the total amount runs up to -- what from the Government? I don't believe we have that. Jones has put into these plants -- what?-- about 600 million -- I think that is the allocation, of Government money. But of course a lot of these larger firms are putting in their own money. I haven't the figures to show what private firms are putting in, but I think it is a safe guess to say that well over a billion dollars will go into those plants, part government and part private.

MR. SMITH: The table on page VI shows it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, $1,902,000,000. It will run about 3 billion dollars, with the private money.

Q The 3 billion is for the 125 plants you mentioned?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I suppose so.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Prentis, of the National Association of Manufacturers,

said he wanted to know how far the Government was prepared to go in reopening defense contracts to permit payment of time and a half for overtime to speed up the program; is there anything in this Budget to take care of that -- to increase the amount of that contract so as to let the manufacturer pay time and a half for overtime? Is there anything in this Budget for that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It would depend on the individual case. Some do put in an over-all figure to cover that and some don't.

Q I wonder whether you have any other money to do that?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) It might depend a little on how much profit they were making.

Q Mr. President, aren't you doing that for the Government? See page 1028.

THE PRESIDENT: Those are for the commitments; those are straight Government.

(Reading)

> "In submitting these recommendations, I have not covered the full requirements of the civilian training program."

We talked about that last Friday.

> "At present, surveys are under way which will provide a basis for transmitting an estimate of funds needed for the extension of this essential defense activity. In the current fiscal year, over a million men and women are included in the various programs of apprentice training, vocational training in trade schools and engineering colleges, work-experience shops, and pilot training."

Now, of course this Civilian Pilot Training Program is being done in a great many different places, some at private cost and some at Government cost. As I said the other day, probably the most effective training is to take, let's say, a young fellow and actually put him into the plant. That probably is the most effective way. You learn more in the plant about certain definite work than you do in training schools and vocational schools and things like that. That's obvious.

But at the same time you do get benefit out of vocational training in schools; even in high schools you can learn something; it's preparatory.

The NYA is doing extraordinarily good work; at the same time, this study is caused by the fact that we don't want to be wasteful if we can help it; and therefore we are studying this civilian pilot training which has been going on, as you know, with a total of 30-some million dollars.

MR. SMITH: That is educational, for education.

THE PRESIDENT: Pilot training, CAA, 30-some million. Some years ago it was a good thing for all of us to learn how to run an automobile; but the Army and the Navy don't think that we are getting enough out of these schools in the way of military and naval pilots. That doesn't mean the abandonment of those schools; it may mean that the training in those schools will be greatly improved to meet the needs of the Army and Navy; and secondly, that all these people who go into these schools, largely at the expense of the Government, with thereby some obligation on their part to serve in the Army or Navy -- which there never has been up to the present time.

Q Was there a large percentage that declined to serve?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, quite large.

Q Intensification of this training will mean a smaller number will be trained?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. And incidentally, you take, on the physical side, there are a lot of these young men that there is no use of even putting them through the CAA course, a 60-hour course, for later on they are going to be found physically unfit to go into the Army or the Navy.

Q This is the 20,000 air-pilot program; and you say that costs 27 million?

MR. SMITH: Thirty-seven million last year; and that is not on the expenditure basis; that is on the appropriation basis.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, Jay (Mr. Hayden of the Detroit News), it was a grand idea that we were going to teach everybody to fly; and now, from practical experience, we think we ought to do some pretty careful combing of the people so as to make them useful for military and naval needs. (Reading)

"Expenditures under the defense program during the last six months amount to 1,750 million dollars. This is two and one-half times the amount spent for national defense in the same period of the fiscal year 1940. However, these expenditures understate the progress already made. In six months, contracts and orders for 10 billion dollars have been placed. This means that in addition to present defense production, all over the country more factories, large and small, are getting ready rapidly to increase production. Once these preparations have been completed actual deliveries and expenditures will be greatly accelerated.

"I expect actual expenditures to be stepped up to four and three-quarter billion dollars in the--"

next

"--six months and to almost 11 billion in the fiscal year 1942. We shall actually expend more than 25 billion dollars for defense within a 3-year period."

Cooperation needed.

"This can be accomplished, but only if management, labor, and consumers cooperate to the utmost.

"NONDEFENSE EXPENDITURES

"The increased military expenditures permit a substantial reduction in nondefense expenditures, particularly those activities which are made less necessary by improved economic conditions. Obligations such as interest, pensions, and insurance benefits are fixed."

And of course you who, like myself, are financial experts -- you realize that is one thing I have harped on year after year, that you can't save money on certain very large items in any budget -- interest charges, pensions, and insurance benefits; but beyond that almost all of these

are fixed by appropriations made by Congress.

> "Almost as fixed are the appropriations for which the Congress has already made legislative commitments -- security grants to the States, Federal aid for highways, the 30 percent of tariff revenue set aside for reducing agricultural surpluses, and similar items. Together, these fixed items make up nearly half of the nondefense expenditures I am proposing for the fiscal year 1942."

In other words, those are the things that no human being can change.

Try to put a bill through Congress to decrease World War pensions --

just <u>try</u>! (Laughter)

> "For the items subject to administrative rather than legislative action,--"

that's the other part that the administrative branch of the Government can try to reduce

> "--I have been able to reduce expenditures by 600 million dollars or 15 percent."

Of course that is a very important item -- the fact that we have been able to estimate a 15 percent decrease in this normal nondefense program. Items which can be reduced 15 percent -- that is something pretty good. I am rather happy in it; I hope it will stick. Sometimes I make recommendations on reducing these expenditures which can be reduced, and the recommendations don't always stick.

Q You aren't thinking of rivers and harbors, are you, Mr. President? -- that 600 million-dollar saving?

THE PRESIDENT: That's in there; we'll come to it.

Q Mr. President, in connection with that civilian training program, do you expect to send up a request for supplemental appropriations when those surveys have been completed?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I can't tell you; it depends. We might want to cut some and increase others. Whether the total will be increased, I cannot say. (Reading)

"This reduction and its relation to total expenditures are shown below:

Expenditures	Estimated in millions of dollars: 1942	1941	Percent change
Defense program	$10,811	$6,464	+67
Fixed commitments	3,196	2,984	+7
Other activities	3,478	4,094	-15
Total(excluding returns from Government corporations)	17,485	13,542	+29

"Certain reductions are possible in carrying out the established policies relating to public works and relief, but little change can be made in the regular operating costs of government. As I indicated in my Budget Message last year, the operating costs of the regular departments are already down to the bedrock of the activities and functions ordered by the Congress. In spite of the defense pressure on many of these regular programs, expenditures will be kept below the level of the current year.

"SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS

"It is our policy to retain the ideal and objectives of our social and economic programs in the face of war changes. The costs of those programs affected by economic activity are flexible."

That's like the thing we are coming to pretty soon -- work relief.

"Because of the defense effort some of these programs can be carried on at a lower cost. In other cases, no curtailment is possible without sacrificing our objectives.

"We should realize, however, that even with a fully functioning defense effort there will remain special areas of need and that social security, agricultural benefits, and work relief contribute to total defense in terms of the health and morale of our people.

"SOCIAL-SECURITY PROGRAMS.--I recommend the continuance in full measure of the social-security programs. This includes not only the payment of old-age benefits as required by law but also aid to youth and continued payments toward the State aid of old persons not covered by the insurance benefits; aids to children and to the physically handicapped. In total, these services will require approximately the same expenditure as in the current fiscal year, except for some increase in grants to the States as required by law.

"Furthermore, I deem it vital that the Congress give consideration to the inclusion in the old-age and survivors insurance system

and the unemployment compensation system of workers not now covered."

Well, that's a thing which sounds, on the old-age thing, like a very large sum; actually, it isn't. If you are working in any so-called industry, you come under old-age insurance. If you are not working in an industry, or if you are working in, let's say, a gasoline station, where they employ less than 8 people, you don't come in. The objective is to increase the number of people in the United States that are covered, to bring in people that are not covered now.

Q All people, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Eventually.

Q By reducing the present exemption -- by bringing the benefits down to two or three persons who may be employed in an enterprise?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is one of the things -- instead of making it 8 people, reduce the number of people. That is one way of doing it. Another way is to extend it to certain classes that are not covered now. There are a great many classes that have been talked about; one is the people who work in domestic service; well, it's pretty tough to have nothing to look forward to in your old age because you happen to be in domestic service. Another group would be people who work on farms. Another group would be people who run their little industries or stores -- the man and his wife who run a gasoline station between them. The coverage ought to be extended. Why should one American, because he happens to work in industry, be covered, and somebody who works at something else not have it?

Q Would that require an appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: Very little the coming year. And actually, the number of people who do not come into the present set-up is very much smaller than

most people realize. It is not much more than a million more people, according to the figures.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, are you going to ask for funds to inspect the health of defense workers? There is some talk about that.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Funds to inspect the health of people working in defense factories.

THE PRESIDENT: The Advisory Commission is working awfully hard on that.

Q You say only a million more on the old age, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, who would come in on an extension so it could be done in a practical way at the present time, about a million more.

Q That would include farmers and domestic help?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, self-help. Of course there are so many things to consider; there are classes of people in the community, like the farmer; probably that would be a voluntary system, not a compulsory system in that case.

Q Don't you mean that only about a million would be brought in who would be over the age limit who would receive the payments?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is surprisingly low.

Q Some of the estimates of Bob Wagner and the Federation of Labor go up into millions.

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, it would not, because, after all, a lot of people don't need it.

Q Entirely on the basis of need?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, is this plan of yours, the social security thing, looking forward to doing away with that dollar matching system we have to help the so-called poor states?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there's any story in it yet, because it's "one of them things". We are going over all kinds of formulas at the present time, trying to find a formula which will aid the poorer States on the basis of the income of the people of the State, on a per capita basis.

Q You would presumably deal with that subject later in a Message to Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Can you give us any idea what that initial appropriation might come to for the million people?

THE PRESIDENT: It would depend entirely on the type of legislation. In the beginning it would not be very much, and very soon it would be on a self-sustaining basis, like the social security as a whole.

Q The "eight or more," that's simply unemployment compensation.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; of course that's a different thing.

Q And that might be reduced?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no, unemployment would not be reduced at all.

Q The minimum number might be reduced?

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, the unemployment expenditures which are handled by the states are being very materially reduced, of course, at this time. During this period we are saving money, because there is so little of that 12 weeks of unemployment money which is being paid out; the fund is growing. (Reading)

"AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS.--The increased domestic market for farm products, resulting from defense expenditure, will improve the income position of many farmers."

As you know, the total farm income this year will run to 9 billion dollars, which, as I remember it, is the highest ever.

Q Calendar year, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Do you (turning to Mr. Smith) remember whether that is fiscal or calendar?

MR. SMITH: Fiscal.

Q Fiscal, 1941?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (Reading)

> "At the same time the curtailment of foreign markets, particularly in cotton, wheat, and tobacco, would leave large numbers of these farmers in a serious plight without the continuance of the farm programs. After weighing both of these factors, I estimate a reduction of 45 million dollars in the agricultural programs. We are definitely maintaining the principles of parity and soil conservation."

No change in the objective.

Q Parity payments are in this Budget for the first time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Heretofore you said you did not object to them as long as Congress was appropriating the money.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How are you going to get the money this time?

THE PRESIDENT: It's actually in.

Q How about parity payments to cover those? Are you going to make recommendations on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Are you still hoping to get tax legislation to cover parity payments last time?

THE PRESIDENT: "Hope springs eternal." How many years have I fallen down on that? Put it the other way, How many years has Congress fallen down on its promise?

Q Mr. President, how much is that parity payment?

MR. BLANDFORD: It is 205.

Q It was 212 before, according to the table.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

> "PUBLIC WORKS.--During this period of national emergency it seems appropriate to defer construction projects that interfere with the defense program by diverting manpower and materials. Further, it is very wise for us to establish a reservoir of post-defense projects to help absorb labor that later will be released by defense industry."

I mentioned the other day the simile of the bookcase. I have up there several shelves of projects up there, all ready to take out, all engineered, so that we could start work on those contracts within a comparatively short time. The specifications are all there, the borings made, ready to proceed and take them out in order of priority.

That order of priority, of course, would be set by Congress. (Reading)

> "With this in mind, I am recommending reductions for rivers and harbors and flood-control work. Where possible, without placing the projects or the water users thereof in jeopardy, reductions are proposed in the expenditures for reclamation projects. I have requested that further contracts for the construction of public buildings outside the District of Columbia be held in abeyance for the present. On the other hand, I have recommended funds for power and other projects considered essential to national defense."

Q Is that our old friend, St. Lawrence?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there's anything in there about St. Lawrence.

MR. SMITH: No.

THE PRESIDENT: Buffalo is still safe! (Laughter)

Q Now that we are talking in terms of the community, is it correct that you are not going to send up a treaty this time but a joint resolution?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet. I really, honestly, don't know, because I haven't had a chance to talk with Senator George and some of the others.

Q Mr. President, in reference to the "public buildings outside of the District of Columbia", do you have in mind any public buildings inside the District as part of the new program or additional programs?

THE PRESIDENT: Only a question of space; we are having a bad time on space. They might have to be temporary buildings in an acute situation.

(Reading)

> "Projects under construction, or on which bids have been solicited, will go forward to completion. Throughout the Federal service other projects are being deferred until a more appropriate time. However, surveys and the planning of new projects will go forward so that construction can be resumed without delay. This will produce a long list of public work projects, apart from defense construction, arranged according to priorities. Such a list could be submitted to a future Congress for the appropriation of funds to put it into operation."

Q Mr. President, can you give us any idea of the over-all saving on public works?

MR. BLANDFORD: About 67 million.

MR. SMITH: The answer to the question about public buildings inside the District is to be found in a little table on page A97.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

> "West central heating plant
> General Accounting Office
> Land for future construction
> Annex buildings, Government Printing Office
> Extension and remodeling, Department of Agriculture,
> Bureau of Economics Building
> Site, State Department Annex Building
> National Archives Building"

MR. GODWIN: State Department Annex Building -- what's that?

THE PRESIDENT: As I remember it, Earl, there has been a desire to do something about what we call Jackson Square or LaFayette Square.

MR. GODWIN: That's what you said before.

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing. Trying to save some of the historic houses on it. If we could save the Beale (?) house on the corner and save the Blair house down on the corner, it would be fine.

MR. SMITH: This is purely for the land that is now vacant; on the back side of the lot there is threatened development.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

> "WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION.--The defense program has already resulted in a substantial increase in production, employment, and national income. Although industrial production is now running 20 percent above the average level of 1929, there are still many persons either unemployed, or employed as emergency workers, or incapable of steady employment."

Right on that -- I don't think you should use the example, because it is pretty rough on certain people, but let's put it this way: A certain Government plant somewhere, a defense plant, up to the first of July was employing a thousand WPA workers, white and colored; and that particular Government plant was given a great deal more permanent work to do, turning things out; and that meant that the number of regular civil service employees had to be tremendously increased -- all kinds, some skills, some semiskills, some common labor; but, being a Government plant, all the employees came under the civil service .

The man who was running the plant did absolutely the right thing; he went first of all to this list of a thousand WPA workers who were already in the plant doing all kinds of things. They were putting up some simple buildings; they were paving some streets, fixing up a new water line, and so forth. And he went through this list of a thousand WPA workers. He has been able to get about 600 of them who were capable of steady employment and has made them regular Government employees. They are, therefore, of course, off the WPA rolls.

I am using this example because it hit me as being well worth while for the country to know about. There were 400 of these people who, for one reason or another, were incapable of steady Government employment. Now those reasons: (I am not telling you where this plant was, because I don't want to hurt anybody's feelings.) There were quite a lot of them who were physically incapable of a full 8 hours' work 5

days a week; just physically, they couldn't stand it -- perfectly good people, but they couldn't stand 8 hours' work. Of course a good many of them were elderly people, under 65; and there were quite a lot of them who were comparatively young people. We all know young people who couldn't do 8 hours' work, 5 days a week, without their health breaking down.

Then there were other people who, in many cases through no fault of their own, didn't have the early mental training that made them mentally capable of filling a job. Don't use the word "moron", but I am using that, off the record; you know what I mean -- people who are so darn dumb they couldn't even dig a ditch; and there are a lot of people who couldn't dig a ditch; you would have to put somebody over them all the time to show them how to dig a ditch. They just weren't capable of filling any kind of Government job.

And then there was a third class of people who were -- what shall I say? -- so unsteady that you didn't know in the afternoon whether they would turn up again the next morning. There are all kinds of causes for that; I don't like to run people down, but we all know that in almost every stratum of society, including Government service, and the newspaper work, there are some people you can't count on to turn up in the morning. It might have been liquor, or might have been something else. Those people aren't capable of holding a steady job. I don't know what the technical word for them is.

Out of this 1,000 people there were about 400 who could not be given a steady job in the Government, and private industry could not give them a steady job. You may say that, theoretically, those people would come into the unemployable class that the community ought to take care of. That is all very lovely; but the community, perhaps, <u>doesn't</u> take care

of them. They are borderline cases. The community says, "This fellow is perfectly capable of working." Sure. And they say, "We won't take care of him." We can't let him starve. So these 400 people, in this particular case, are remaining on WPA. Hence, we have to continue WPA appropriations.

I cite that as a reason why we can't reduce this WPA estimate below the one-third that we have cut off in this Budget. It was, roughly, a billion five, and now it is a billion. We have cut off a third.

Q Mr. President, do you think this number of 4 able to work as compared with 6--

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The other way round.

Q Four unable to work as compared with 6 able to work is a new factor in the unemployment situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is not.

Q That seems like a large number.

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't surprisingly high, and I'll tell you why; after all, these people are people who, especially in the last few years, represent that element in the community which has not had the "git up and git" -- the initiative -- to go out and find a job, in large part, in a place like I am talking about.

Q It might be a depression development which has become more acute over the last 8 years?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Has there been any suggestion that the Government create a new category of relief instead of keeping them on full pay as WPA workers?

THE PRESIDENT: No, Jay (Mr. Hayden, of the Detroit News), I would hate the idea of starting a new category; and speaking about self-respect of people, I would hate to create a new category of people who are capable

of working but who just aren't capable of being given steady employment. I don't want to hurt them; if you set up a new category, it would hurt them.

Q Isn't that the very thing that is done between state and federal relief?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because the people who are unemployable today and who are taken care of by the city or county are really unemployable people, and in their case there is no shame in coming into that class.

Q These are borderline cases?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, they are borderline cases.

Q Mr. President, do you think that ratio of 6 to 4 is very constant?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think you can generalize on that. There are many sections of the country where the ratio would be even lower; and there are certain places where it might be higher.

Q Are there a good many states where there are few defense industries where the unemployment load will continue to be as great?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. However, don't forget this: The defense program means there will be additional members, undoubtedly, taken off WPA. The program may go so fast that we may be able to decrease the total amount I am asking for. We are giving our best estimate as of today.

Q Mr. President, do you have any estimates as to the number of people on WPA rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: At the present time?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: It is up around a million nine, and the waiting list is smaller; it was about a million, and now it is down to less than a million.

Q Mr. President, will there be a supplemental appropriation in this fiscal year for relief?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes, there will have to be. This is something new, you know; the last three or four years I asked for only enough money to tide us through for the first 8 months, and this is the first year that we are asking for money to tide us through the whole fiscal year.

Q On page VIII of the Message there is indicated a reduction of non-defense activities amounting to 616 million dollars. Can you tell us something about that?

MR. SMITH: I don't get the question.

Q The table on page VIII indicates a reduction in non-defense activities totaling 616 million dollars. There are items of 45 million for agriculture, 67 less for public works, and so on.

MR. SMITH: You are looking at the table or the Message?

THE PRESIDENT: He is looking at the table.

MR. BLANDFORD: About 400 million on collections, about 68 million on PWA expenses, about 67 million on public works, approximately 45 million on agriculture, 9 million CCC, 7 million for NYA, and the remainder, which is about 25 million, I think, is scattered throughout the departments.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

"The defense program will lead to further reemployment, and also to a further increase in the labor force and to a shift from part-time to full-time or over-time employment. But even under the full defense program we cannot expect full absorption of the labor force because some people just cannot be fitted into the picture. There will be some localities with a labor shortage at the same time that others have a labor surplus. There will be shortages of particular skills and aptitudes at the same time that others are in surplus.

"I recommend an appropriation of 995 million dollars for work relief for the full fiscal year. This is 400 million dollars less than the amount required for the present fiscal year. It will not be necessary to use this full amount if the defense program should result in a more general reemployment than is

presently indicated. The expenditure can also be reduced if employers will contribute by hiring unskilled or semi-skilled or older workers for those jobs where special skills are not required.

"We must face the fact that even with what we call 'full employment' there will remain a large number of persons who cannot be adjusted to our industrial life. For this group, the Government must provide work opportunities."

Q Mr. President, with reference to that figure of 400 million less; is the figure of 420 million supplemental for WPA for the rest of this year?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the rest of this year.

Q The table shows a supplemental of 350 million.

MR. BLANDFORD: That is a working balance carried over.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

"FINANCING THE NATIONAL PROGRAM

"ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURES AND REVENUE COMPARED.--The defense program dominates not only the expenditure side of the Budget, but influences also the expected revenue. Economic activities and national income are rising to record heights. From a higher national income a greater revenue will flow, although in the case of most taxes there is, of course, a time lag. The revenue for the fiscal year 1941 will reflect some of the increase in defense activities; the revenue for the fiscal year 1942 will be affected to a larger extent; but the full impact will not be felt before the fiscal year 1943.

"The revenue for the fiscal year 1942 is expected to be 9 billion dollars."

Q Is that on the basis of existing tax rates?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What estimates have you for additional taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't; that's up to Congress.

Q Mr. President, do you know what was the largest total of revenue ever received, or what year it was?

THE PRESIDENT: Who is old enough to remember the World War? Jim (Mr. Wright of the Buffalo Evening News), do you have any idea?

MR. WRIGHT: It is just under seven billion dollars, I believe; and it was in one of the World War years. We have exceeded it several times in the past eight years.

THE PRESIDENT: Have we, <u>really</u>? I didn't know that! (Laughter) You encourage me.

MR. WRIGHT: It also included the postal revenues.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (Reading)

> "It will exceed the revenue collected in the fiscal year 1940 -- the last year before the start of the present defense program -- by 3 billion dollars. One-half of this increase will come from the defense taxes already enacted by the Congress, the other half from the increase in national income.
>
> "The revenue expected for 1942 will be 1.6 billions larger than the total of all nondefense expenditures."

That's interesting.

"Receipts	Estimated in millions of dollars		Percent change
	1942	1941	
Progressive taxes on individuals and estates	$1,979	$1,571	+26
Profit and capital taxes on corporations	2,839	1,745	+63
Customs, excise, stamp, and miscellaneous taxes	2,756	2,657	+4
Employment taxes for Federal old-age and survivors insurance	725	668	+9
Other employment taxes	243	230	+6
Miscellaneous receipts (including back income taxes)	429	422	+2
Total receipts (excluding returns from Government corporations)	8,971	7,293	+23
Deduct net appropriation for Federal old-age and survivors insurance trust fund"			

which comes in and goes out and is up nine.

"Net receipts"

not counting those insurance things, up twenty-four.

Q I would like to ask what part of the revenue expected is represented by defense taxes.

THE PRESIDENT: About one-half.

Q Of the increase?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That is a billion and a half. Read the previous sentence. In other words, three billion is the increase since fiscal year 1940; one-half comes from defense taxes and the other from income. (Reading)

> "This 1.6 billions is greater than the annual expenditure on defense before the present program started, but less than will be necessary for maintaining the Army and Navy at the new level."

In other words, it more than covers what might be called the expenditures on Army and Navy up to a couple of years ago, before we started this big increase, because you remember at that time the Army and Navy together ran to about a billion dollars. It is not enough, of course, to maintain the Army and Navy at their new levels. (Reading)

> "Under present tax laws, deficits of 6.2 billion dollars in 1941 and 9.2 billion dollars in 1942 may be expected."

"Summary	Estimated in millions of dollars	
	1942	1941
Expenditures	$17,485	$13,542
Receipts	8,275	6,653
Excess of expenditures over receipts	9,210	6,889
Less return of surplus funds from Government corporations		700
Deficit	9,210	6,189"

Q There again there is nothing shown as to what is contemplated in increased revenue by increased taxes.

THE PRESIDENT: We're coming to that. (Reading)

> "In presenting the above calculations, I am assuming that the Congress will accept the recommendation of the Secretary of the Treasury that the earmarking of taxes for retirement of defense obligations be repealed; and the proposal of the Postmaster General that the 3-cent rate on first-class postage be continued.

"TAX POLICY.--"

There you are Jim.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, I have read that.

THE PRESIDENT: We are not including anything in any of these figures except present law.

MR. WRIGHT: Then we cannot have what you recommend in the way of increased taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but that is worked out on the Hill.

MR. WRIGHT: You last year mentioned the sum which you hoped to raise in taxes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I am not saying that this year. (Laughter)

MR. WRIGHT: In other words, Congress exceeded your sum by something like a billion dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't put an upper limit on it this year.

MR. WRIGHT: What does that mean?

THE PRESIDENT: You remember last year when they authorized the increase in the debt limit they authorized the issuance of a special form of defense securities which, as I remember it, were retirable in five years --

MR. WRIGHT: (interposing) That's right, four billion dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: --and that they would be taken out of the general finances of the Government and set apart over there, but that we had to put in a retirement fund equal to one-fifth of the total as an expenditure out of the Budget. We believe, to put it in the simplest way I know, that five years is too soon to retire these things; it is too much of an immediate drain on the Budget. We may need to put in longer financing than five years, now that we are held to it. (Reading)

> "There is no agreement on how much of such an extraordinary defense program should be financed on a pay-as-you-go basis and how much by borrowing. Only very drastic and restrictive

taxation which curtails consumption would finance defense wholly on a pay-as-you-go basis. I fear that such taxation would interfere with the full use of our productive capacities. We have a choice between restrictive tax measures applied to the present national income and a higher tax yield from increased national income under less restrictive tax measures. I suggest, therefore, a financial policy aimed at collecting progressive taxes out of a higher level of national income. I am opposed to a tax policy which restricts general consumption as long as unused capacity is available and as long as idle labor can be employed."

Q Sales tax, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's one form.

Q That would be included?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That is a general sales tax, Mr. President; what about profits taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. I suppose the easiest way to put it is that they are a borderline case.

Q Mr. President, is there any consideration of reenacting the industries tax?

THE PRESIDENT: That is done in Congress. They are calling in the Treasury people, as usual.

Q There will be no subsequent Message on taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine they will start the machinery very soon. I gave it to them yesterday.

Q There'll be no further Message?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't guarantee there won't. Sometimes one has to ask twice; maybe they didn't hear me. I might have to say it again, Paul (Mr. Leach of the Chicago Daily News).

Q Mr. President, would it be satisfactory to you for them to wait until the March returns are in, so that they can get a more accurate estimate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I imagine they will start, though, on the hearings in the Ways and Means Committee almost at once; but they probably won't make any final decision until the fifteenth of March, when the returns

are in.

Q Mr. President, on this question of new tax rates to be added by Congress this year, what additional revenue is derived from that will show fifty percent on this fiscal year's income; that is, there are two classes in this fiscal year.

THE PRESIDENT: No, all we agreed on was that we wouldn't make any new tax legislation retroactive.

Q Yes, but this would apply on 1941 income; therefore, there would be two classes in 1941 to apply on this Budget. So there is some gravy there that you can't count on.

THE PRESIDENT: It wouldn't come in in cash.

Q Mr. President, you expressed dissatisfaction with certain taxes -- abnormal profits, and so on; do you refer particularly to excess profits taxes? Do you think they are not high enough?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to take that up with Congress.

Q You are the one that expresses dissatisfaction, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute. (Reading)

> "We cannot yet conceive the complete measure of extraordinary taxes which are necessary to pay off the cost of emergency defense and to aid in avoiding inflationary price rises which may occur when full capacity is approached.
>
> "However, a start should be made this year to meet a larger percentage of defense payments from current tax receipts. The additional tax measures should be based on the principle of ability to pay. Because it is the fixed policy of the Government that no citizen should make any abnormal net profit out of national defense, I am not satisfied that existing laws are in this respect adequate."

There you are; we know lots of people are getting rich out of this National Defense Program. And you heard the applause yesterday. That's the general sentiment of the country, that people should not get rich out of this defense program; and you and I know that a lot of

people <u>are</u>, and therefore the present tax system on excess profits doesn't seem to be filling the bill. That's just the plain fact.

(Reading)

"I hope that action toward these ends will be taken at this session of the Congress.

"I see many ways in which our tax system can be improved without resort to restrictive tax levies. By adjustments in the existing tax laws the present rates of progressive taxation could be made fully effective, as I believe the Congress intended.

"We must face the fact that the continued maintenance of an expanded Army and Navy and the interest on our defense debt will call for large Federal expenditures in the years ahead. Our tax system must be made ready to meet these requirements.

"I am as much concerned about our long-run need for an improved tax system as I am about the immediate necessity of financing the defense program.

"I have often expressed my belief that no really satisfactory tax reform can be achieved without readjusting the Federal-State-local fiscal relationship. I urge a thorough investigation of the possibilities of a comprehensive tax reform; I propose that meanwhile we make all possible progress in improving the Federal tax system."

Now, this is entirely off the record, but Harold Smith and Jack Blandford and I had a talk about putting that in. I had been putting that in about a better relationship between the Federal Government taxes ever since I went to Albany in January, 1929. I didn't want to put it in again, but Harold says, "It's always been in; you ought to put it in again." I said, "'Hope springs eternal,'" and he said, "Yes." So I said, "All right, we'll put it in again." I said, "I'll put it in again, and you can consider it as sort of a piece of candy for you boys," and somebody said, "All-day sucker." It's one of those things that we hope before we die we'll make some progress in.

Q Mr. President, at an Annual Budget Conference I attended in the "dark ages" you said you were going to try to get together some tax experts to get at that sort of thing.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we have been doing it.

Q Do you think he will leave in enough to see it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think you will. (Laughter)

Q In your suggestion for general improvement of the tax laws, do you agree with the statement made in 1939 that perhaps in the upper brackets the surtax rates are too high?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Do you, in this Message, take Mr. Morgenthau's stand on repealing the tax exemptions?

THE PRESIDENT: We ought to do it, either by what they call the "Carter Glass method" or some other way.

Q That wouldn't improve your future local-state relationship.

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe not. (Laughter) Of course you know the joke (off the record) about a great friend of mine, a lawyer in Mew York, who was talking about the taxes of some of his clients. He said, "Take so and so (mentioning the name); why, he's liable to pay in income taxes 80 percent of his income, between the Federal and the State." I said, "Yes, I've heard that before; does he?" He said, "Hmmm -- no." So all this rot that is written and printed about people being liable to pay these great high-bracket taxes -- show me the man who does! I will issue the challenge to any of you to show me the man who pays anything like the actual higher-bracket taxes, because he doesn't; he has all kinds of exemptions and exceptions -- exempt bonds and so forth and so on -- so it is just pure, unadulterated tripe (that's the only word I can use) to talk about people paying the percentages named in the upper brackets. They don't.

Give me the name of one man with an income of $500,000. a year,

net income; the excess on that would be somewhere around 60 or 65 percent. Is there any one of them that pays that percentage on $500,000? Of course not.

Q Isn't that the reason they buy tax-exempt bonds, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Surely!

Q It has been suggested that one way to get more money is to broaden the income tax base and bring in a lot of people that aren't paying income taxes; would you approve of that?

THE PRESIDENT: That goes into the question of recommendations on higher brackets, or middle brackets, or lower brackets; that's up to Congress, of course.

Q Mr. President, before we leave this tax section, what about the sentence on a "financial policy aimed at collecting progressive taxes out of a higher level of national income"? Are we to understand by that that you are fairly well satisfied with the present rates?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I wouldn't make any assumptions. In other words, there are a lot of people that -- well, what will I say? Let's take an illustration: Suppose you and your family are living on $1,000 a year, or $2,000 a year. In spite of exemptions, you pay all kinds of taxes -- undisclosed taxes -- moving pictures, tobacco; maybe you take a drink; you are paying taxes all the time, relatively on a higher individual basis than the fellow with $10,000. a year, or $15,000. a year. And the people who are getting higher incomes -- over $2,000 a year -- they are more able to pay more taxes than the poor devils who are getting $2,000. or less. And $2,000., mind you, in this country is away above the average -- don't forget that. We fellows here -- every fellow in this room -- can afford to pay more Federal taxes. It's just a case of

relative ability to pay; and we, all of us, ought to pay more taxes. That's an awful thing to say, but you all believe it.

MR. SMITH: Mr. President, the word "progressive" may be causing some trouble; there it means ability to pay.

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading)

> "BORROWING.--A substantial part of the defense program must, of course, be financed through borrowing. Individual investors will be given increased opportunities to contribute their share toward defense through the purchase of Government securities. Such borrowing is not hazardous as long as it is accompanied by tax measures which assure a sufficient tax yield in the future. This raises the question of the debt limit."

Q There is going to be a lot of talk caused by that previous sentence, that individual investors will be given an opportunity to contribute. Is there going to be a new Treasury policy on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so; it has been announced.

Q That means a higher interest rate.

THE PRESIDENT: In some cases, of course; it depends on the security. I don't mean that it means the actual interest rate that the Government would pay would be any higher; but as you know, a long-term bond carries, normally, under the present quotations, a good deal higher rate of interest than a one-year note. Let's put it this way: Suppose the Government wants to borrow money on a one-year note; I think it can get the money at less than 1 percent.

MR. SMITH: Three-fourths of one percent.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; now the average individual probably doesn't want to buy that type of bond to put his savings in; but some of this financing will be in longer-term securities, 20-year bonds.

MR. SMITH: Up to 50.

THE PRESIDENT: We probably wouldn't touch that. On the other hand, if the

Government should do some of its financing on longterms, they would probably pay up to 2 percent.

Q The point is, that doesn't mean anything to us.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will find that all of the securities hereafter are not going to be tax exempt.

Q Mr. President, won't the banks kick at tax-exempt?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, because that is part of the Treasury policy to give the little fellow a chance to fill his subscription 100 percent.

Q LaGuardia has opposed that proposal of Mr. Morgenthau.

THE PRESIDENT: A lot of people have. I think the Conference of Mayors did. Probably if I were a mayor I would. (Laughter) That's what they call human nature.

Q Mr. President, do you expect that will affect interest rates over the long term?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no indication that interest rates are going up.

The debt limit. I am awfully sorry to spoil some good future stories on that.

> "The Congress, by making appropriations and levying taxes, in fact, controls the size of the debt regardless of the existence of a statutory debt limit. If the Congress, subsequent to the establishment of a statutory debt limit, makes appropriations and authorizations which require borrowing in excess of that limit, it has, in effect, rendered that prior limit null and void. In the first 130 years of our national life, the Congress controlled the debt successfully without requiring such a limit. In view of these facts, I question the significance of a statutory debt limit, except as it serves as a fiscal monitor."

Q Mr. President, would you just as soon see the Congress do away with the debt limit entirely?

THE PRESIDENT: Just as soon. At the present time the debt limit is what?

MR. SMITH: Forty-nine billion.

THE PRESIDENT: Forty-nine billion; suppose this Congress passed appropria-

tions for defense that called for the expenditure of two billion more -- fifty-one. All right; and suppose I sign that bill; what happens? Is the debt limit 49, according to the previous statute, or is it fifty-one, according to the appropriations that are passed by the Congress? There is an old rule of law that where there are two conflicting statutes, the more recent one applies. If we appropriate over the forty-nine, and supposing we take no action on the forty-nine, obviously that old statutory debt limit is busted by the fact that Congress has appropriated two billion dollars more than the debt limit.

You can't get away from that; it's mandatory. The debt limit is a "stop, look, and listen" signal; it is not controlling. Appropriations are controlling, because they are the last word from the Congress. The whole thing is purely economic; it doesn't amount to a hill of beans, except as a monitor to tell the people of this country, "Look! We're higher than we ever have been before!"

Q Mr. President, don't the appropriation bills use this phrase, that there is hereby appropriated out of funds not otherwise appropriated, and so on?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q If all funds are otherwise appropriated, wouldn't that render the appropriation bill null and void?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The power of Congress lies in the last appropriation bill that they pass.

Q Haven't they already gone over that?

MR. SMITH: No.

Q In connection with sales of bonds to individuals, would it be considered unpatriotic not to buy them?

THE PRESIDENT: Not to buy what?

Q These bonds that are to be sold widely to individuals.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends somewhat on circumstances -- how many children one has, and things like that.

Q Can the debt limit be interpreted as a notice to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Congress has final power, through the appropriating method.

Q Does an appropriation bill take legal precedence over the statute that fixed the limit?

THE PRESIDENT: As I said before, suppose you have two conflicting statutes; you have an old statutory debt limit, and then Congress comes along and appropriates money in excess of that debt limit; what do I do? -- I guess I would probably take the last word of Congress rather than what they said the year before.

Q Mr. President, isn't the debt limit expressed by the limit on the issuance of bonds and securities against the Secretary of the Treasury? And therefore, if he can't raise additional money by issuing bonds, wouldn't he have to go to taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; that raises a very nice constitutional question. Suppose you get into the situation of no money in the treasury, and Congress goes into a tailspin -- talks, talks, talks, and does nothing, and there is no money in the treasury; what do I do? I don't know.

Q Mr. President, don't you think that acts as a sort of moral restraint?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that's why we use this word, fiscal monitor.

Q There is a conflict of opinion between yourself and the Secretary; he has suggested raising the debt limit to 60 or 65 billion dollars. He wants a debt limit.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right.

Q What about Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I would just as soon Congress raised the debt limit; frankly, I would just as soon they would repeal the old thing. I couldn't write an article about it, because it is so uninteresting.

Q On recapitulation of the public debt, it seems that Congress has already exceeded the 49-billion-dollar limit.

THE PRESIDENT: Harold (Budget Director Smith) says no, it has not.

Q Page 23 shows --

MR. SMITH: (interposing) That is the end of the fiscal year.

THE PRESIDENT: You mean we will be busted at the end of the fiscal year?

MR. SMITH: With authorizations.

Q Mr. President, in your opinion, how high could this national debt go and the country remain solvent?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know the quotation I gave seven or eight years ago about banking opinion?

Q About 80 billion?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think 60 or 70; that was on very good banking advice. I just passed it on.

Q You don't have any opinion yourself?

THE PRESIDENT: I just passed on what the bankers said at that time.

Q Some of us younger ones don't remember that; what was it?

THE PRESIDENT: It was just that eminent bankers had said because of the size of the country, the income and resources and assets and appropriate values, the country could stand a debt limit of somewhere around 70 billion dollars. That's just recollection.

Q Who said that?

THE PRESIDENT: Eminent bankers; and then everybody wanted to pin it on

certain eminent bankers, because they wanted to crucify the eminent bankers.

Q The prohibition on the public debt is against the amount of securities which the Government can stand at any one time; you can't spend what you haven't got.

THE PRESIDENT: That is the question you raise; it is terribly academic. We are going to pay for these defense orders some way. It's awfully academic.

Q The function of the debt limit as fiscal monitor is the reason for it?

THE PRESIDENT: That is really the only reason for maintaining a statutory debt limit.

Q Would you think that would be an adequate reason for maintaining a statutory debt limit?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is up to Congress, remembering always that they can bust it without repealing it.

Q Do you think Congress would give greater attention to other controls if the debt limit were repealed?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a terrible "if". (Reading)

> "The fiscal policy outlined here would be in accord with our objective of financing the defense program in an equitable manner, facilitating full use of our national resources, and avoiding inflationary policies which would aggravate the problems of post-defense adjustment.
>
> "THE DEBT PROBLEM.--For more than twenty-five years the world has been in a state of political turmoil and its economies have been out of balance. This world condition is reflected in unbalanced budgets in all countries. Here, the first World War, the war against the depression, the present defense program, all resulted in large additions to the Federal debt.
>
> "I understand the concern of those who are disturbed by the growth of the Federal debt. Yet the main fiscal problem is not the rise of the debt, but the rise of debt charges in relation to the development of our resources.
>
> "The fight for recovery raised national income by more than

30 billion dollars above the depression depth."

Roughly from thirty-nine to sixty-nine. (Reading)

"In the same period the total annual Federal interest charges increased by 400 million dollars. Even if these interest charges increase, they can scarcely present a serious fiscal problem so long as a high level of national income can be maintained.

"Investors are fully aware of this fact. The bonds of the United States Government are the safest securities in the world because they are backed by the best asset in the world -- the productive capacity of the American people. Our tax burden is still moderate compared to that of most other countries.

"It should be borne in mind that our national debt results from wars and the economic upheavals following war."

This is background stuff: It is an interesting thing that if you were to count up the deficits of all the big nations and small nations, especially the past eight years, you would find that the cost of armament, plus the cost of previous wars, was just about responsible for the total of that deficit. That is an amazing fact. Take Sweden, take Belgium, Holland, France, Germany, England, ourselves, and all of these deficits. I am talking about the last eight years, because it dates back to the arrival of Herr Hitler on the scene (this is background stuff) in January, 1933, eight years ago, and the sum of armament expenditures, plus the cost of former wars, is equal to the total of that deficit. That is an amazing thing. People have never got that through their heads. It's just a question of war. That is the reason why I talk about one of the elements of world peace, the representation of cost of armament, in order to make the world solvent -- a perfectly obvious thing, quite aside from the humanitarian end of it. In order to make the world solvent, we have got to cut out spending so much money on armaments. (Reading)

"These conditions are not of our own making. They have been forced upon us. The national debt of almost all nations would be far lower today if competitive armaments had not existed during the past quarter of a century."

Of course that includes the World War, debts caused by it. (Reading)

"If this war should be followed, as I hope it will, by peace in a world of good neighbors, then the complete elimination of competitive armaments will become possible. Only in such a world can economic stability be restored."

And that is a thing you who write for financial papers and papers like the Sun, and so on, ought to hammer home.

That's about all on that.

(The President did not read the remainder of the Message.)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #708,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 7, 1941, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe anybody wants to talk finances; they have done a lot of it today! (The President was referring to the Budget Conference this morning.)

I have only two things I can think of; one is, I am putting in Minton as Administrative Assistant, to act as legs for me -- with a "passion for anonymity" and one or two other things. I suggest to you that he is not going to be liaison officer with the Hill. He does know a lot about all kinds of things in the Government. He has been on the Military Affairs Committee, but his work will not be confined to military affairs. He will act as legs, eyes, ears, et cetera, as one of the Administrative Assistants.

Q Not specifically assigned to the Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not.

Then the other thing is the Executive Orders that have gone out today; and again I will have to talk to you a little so you will not write stories saying, "It is learned on good authority," or jump to conclusions. (Laughter) I will give you better authority, if you will follow it.

This (holding a copy of the Executive Order dated today) sets up the Office of Production Management, which I told you about the other day -- an Executive Order and an Administrative Order. The Executive Order is to -- I'll try to eliminate the

formalities in here - to increase production, and so forth and so on --

"...it is hereby ordered,"

First, to be in the Office for Emergency Management of the Executive Office of the President, which is merely conforming to existing law, an Office of Production Management which will consist of a Director General, and an Associate Director General, Secretary of War, Secretary of the Navy.

"With such advice and assistance as--"

may be required

"....from other departments and agencies,"..."and subject to such regulations"----"as the President may from time to time prescribe--

all these things carry out wordings of law --

"and subject further to the general policy that the Departments of War and Navy and other departments and agencies of the Government will be utilized to the maximum extent compatible with efficiency."

That doesn't mean anything at all except, when it comes to getting a filing clerk, instead of going to some other place and bringing down a filing clerk, let's say, from somebody's law office in New York, they will take it off the civil service lists which are already in existence in the Government of the United States, and everybody, of course, is agreeable to that.

And when it comes to purchases of -- Oh, what will I say? -- a piece of blotting paper, a desk light, a donkey for the desk -- they will buy it through the regular Government purchase sources instead of going on the outside.

It shall: (reading)

"a. Formulate and execute in the public interest all measures needful and appropriate in order " --

get that,

"formulate and execute--"

in order, first,

"to increase, accelerate, and regulate the production and supply of materials, articles and equipment and the provision of emergency plant facilities and services required for the national defense, and--"

secondly

"to insure.. ...coordination of those activities of the several departments, corporations, and other agencies of the Government which are directly concerned therewith."

You can't make it much broader than that in giving powers.

"b."

To

"survey, analyze, and summarize for purposes of coordination the stated requirements of the War and Navy and other departments and agencies"..."and of foreign governments.."

get that; that's in line with what we said yesterday and what we said this morning on the Budget--

"for materials, articles, and equipment needed for defense."

--so that you won't have any conflicts between the foreign program and the domestic program.

Equipment for defense:

"c. Advise with respect to the plans and schedules of the various departments and agencies for the purchase--"

that is, planning them, all these purchases of --

"materials, articles, and equipment...""major defense orders and contracts...""keep informed of the progress of various programs of production and supply."

That's the planning end of it.

"d. Plan and take all lawful steps necessary to assure the provision of an adequate supply of raw materials essential to the production of finished products needed

for defense.

"e. To formulate plans for the mobilization for defense of the production facilities of the Nation, and to take all lawful action necessary to carry out such plans.

"f."

I am reading all these because you would not have time to read them yourselves. (Laughter) Am I right? I can say things like that in the family; it's all right.

"Determine the adequacy of existing production facilities and to assure their maximum use; and, when necessary, to stimulate and plan the creation of such additional facilities and sources of production and supply as may be essential to increase and expedite defense production.

"g. To determine when, to what extent, and in what manner priorities shall be accorded to deliveries of material as provided in Section...."

something or other of an act.

"Deliveries of material shall take priority,..."in accordance with such determinations and the orders issued..." "by the Office of Production Management."

Now, right on that, so that the thing is clear: they will issue the final priority orders; but that will be done after they have gone through one of three sections under them. Under these four there are three divisions -- Production, Purchases, and Priorities. Now, when it comes to a question of priorities, this Division of Priorities, with a director of its own, will make the studies on it and make recommendation to this office of four people. Of course nine times out of ten, or more, the recommendation of the Division of Priorities, which has done all the special work on it, will be carried out and issued as an order by the Office of Production Management.

"Perform the functions and exercise the authorities vested in the President by Section 9 of the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940."

Harold (Budget Director Smith), what is that?

MR. SMITH: That is the provision under which the Government may take over plants.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes, that's under the draft law which allows me to take over a plant in case the plant gets rambunctious; and then I tell the Office of Production Management, "You go ahead and take over the rambunctious plant and don't bother me with it."

> "i. Serve as ...""liaison and channel of communication between the Advisory Commission to the Council of National Defense and the Departments of War and Navy with respect to the duties imposed...""on the Commission by the following named acts."

And then follow one, two, three, four, five acts. That is a purely technical provision.

> "3. The Director General, in association with the Associate Director General, and serving under the direction and supervision of the President, shall discharge and perform the administrative responsibilities and duties required to carry out the functions specified--"

those a to j functions

> "subject to and in conformity with the policies and regulations (not inconsistent with such regulations as may be issued by the President)--"

that is only put in as part of the legal language

> "--prescribed by the Office of Production Management."

I suppose the easiest way to do it is that these four people -- the Office of Production Management, Knudsen, Hillman, and the two secretaries -- fix the policy, and then Knudsen and Hillman carry it out, just like a law firm that has a case; say there are two partners, and they carry it out as a law firm. Anybody that knows anything about management -- other than editorial writers (laughter) -- will realize that is the practical way to handle that kind of a matter, just like a law firm with two main partners.

Q Are they equals?

THE PRESIDENT: That's not the point; they're a firm. Is a firm equals? I don't know. See what I mean? Roosevelt & O'Connor is a very famous firm in New York; there were just two partners; I don't know whether we were equal or not. Probably we might have disagreed in regard to a catch question of that kind; but we never had a dispute or an argument.

Q That isn't a catch question.

Q Everybody in town is wondering about that.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a silly thing to wonder about; it's a firm. In other words, if you had had an important case -- I would not say what kind of case -- and you had hired Roosevelt & O'Connor in the early days, you would not have asked that question.

Q Mr. President, is this the firm of Roosevelt, Hillman & Knudsen?

THE PRESIDENT: I have nothing to do with this.

Q What about the clause, "under direction of the President"?

THE PRESIDENT: That's only to conform with the law. I have nothing to do with it, whatsoever. There may be a question of policy, and they may say, What does the President think of this question with a pro and con on it? They may come in and ask me what I think of it. That will happen very rarely.

Q Does the term "execute" apply to all their functions?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, suppose, as might happen,--

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You mean "if"?

Q I would like to leave out the "if". Take a question of a contract for the Ford Motor Company; and suppose Mr. Knudsen believes Ford should

get the contract because of speed reasons, and Mr. Hillman thinks Ford should not get the contract because of labor reasons; in your view, what should be done?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is, Suppose that question did not arise, what would you say? You see, in other words, you would feel awfully cheap, wouldn't you?

Q You would expect agreement.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, of course.

Q Why is it you don't want a single, responsible head?

THE PRESIDENT: I have a single, responsible head; his name is Knudsen & Hillman.

Q Two heads.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that's one head. In other words, aren't you looking for trouble? Would you rather come to one law firm, or two?

Q I don't think that's comparable.

THE PRESIDENT: Just the same thing, exactly. Wait until you run into trouble.

Q I would rather avoid trouble.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they will. They think they will -- that's an interesting thing.

Q Mr. President, as I understood the reading of your order, you said this agency -- these two men -- would fix policy; does that mean that in fixing policy they will decide what the Army and Navy, under the defense program, need?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; the Army and Navy are military things. The Army and Navy naturally would decide.

Q I mean about fixing the policy -- they will fix policy about the execution

of the program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's right.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. President, on the Niagara frontier the Ontario Hydro-Electric Company has authorized --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Who is that? -- Jim?

MR. EARLY: Yes.

MR. WRIGHT: (Buffalo Evening News) --Has authorized an increased diversion of water in order to bring electric power from the Canadian side to the American side. There is some available water there for our side, and there has not been any authorization for increased diversion. Can you tell me how that is?

THE PRESIDENT: I would ask Knudsen & Hillman; I haven't the faintest idea.

Q When policy isn't involved, would Knudsen have Production and Hillman Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: You can't do it that way. Go back to the analogy of the law firm; suppose there are two partners; one may specialize in contract cases and the other in tort cases, of the two main divisions. That doesn't mean that they won't talk things over; and sometimes it may be a tort case that the contract fellow will take charge of, or it may be a contract case that the tort specialist will take charge of, if it happens to be something he is interested in, or down his alley. They will work on the case together.

Let's say that in any given contract or proposal to create a new plant, or something of that kind, there will be certain problems of materials, transportation, the setting up of the floor, the providing of the tools; and there will be other problems that will be

concerned with various kinds of labor questions; I don't mean questions of strikes or hours or things like that -- that's terribly narrow-- but the problem, Are there enough riveters in that particular area? There is no hard-and-fast division; it is perfectly possible that Knudsen might happen to know more about the riveters in that area than Hillman happened to know. They will work together on it. That's a situation that is terribly difficult for some minds to get, but it's the way all good business is run.

Q Mr. President, will any of the functions of the Advisory Commission remain outside the scope of the Office of Production Management?

THE PRESIDENT: I will come to that later, because there are a couple of other orders in here that really cover that. The Advisory Committee goes right ahead on certain functions that have to be done; for instance, the problem of retail prices -- the housewife; that still is very definitely a Government function to see that the housewife doesn't get gypped. Miss Elliott will continue to give advice to protect the housewives against this firm of Knudsen & Hillman. And the question of the price of copper -- Leon Henderson will continue to give advice to Knudsen & Hillman to keep the price of copper down to a reasonable level. See what I mean?

Q I was wondering whether that would be routed to the Office of Production Management or to you.

THE PRESIDENT: It goes up to the Office of Production Management.

Q Mr. President, in your recent conversation did you find them in substantial agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely. (Continues reading and paraphrasing.)

"4. There shall be within the--"

Offices

"--the following and such other operating divisions as may be necessary from time to time:"

Division of Production, Division of Purchases, and Division of Priorities.

The Division of Production -- Mr. Jack Biggers is going in as the Director; the Division of Purchases, Mr. Donald Nelson is going in as Director; and the Division of Priorities, Mr. Stettinius is going in as Director. So all the places are filled; they are all ready to start.

"Each division...""shall be in charge of a director appointed by the Office of Production Management with the approval of the President.

"5. There shall be within the Office of Production Management a Priorities Board--"

this sets up a new Priorities Board to take the place of the old one

"--composed of six members. A chairman and three other members shall be appointed or designated by the President;"

The Director General and Associate General Director are members ex officio. And on that "chairman and three other members," Stettinius comes in as chairman; Leon Henderson comes in on Price Control; Donald Nelson comes in as a member, I think, but you better check; I have forgotten who the other is. The Priorities Board serves as an advisory body "from time to time as may be required by the Office Of Production Management" to --

"--make findings and submit recommendations with respect to the establishment of priorities, placing of mandatory orders, assignment of preference ratings, allocation of deliveries, and other related matters. In making its findings and recommendations the Priorities Board shall take into account general social and economic considerations and the effect the proposed actions would have upon the civilian population.

"6. Within the limits of such funds as may be allocated to it by the President on the recommendation of the Bureau of the Budget, the Office of Production Management may employ necessary

personnel and make provision for..."

pen and ink.

> "However, the Office of Production Management shall use insofar as practicable such statistical, informational, fiscal, personnel and other general business services and facilities as may be made available through the Office for Emergency Management or other agencies....."

(The President did not read No. 7.)

And with that goes an Administrative Order, which is purely routine, on the Office for Emergency Management. This merely further sets up and modifies the old order of last September, a year ago -- September 8, 1939 -- and as I say, it is merely to carry out the law. This Office of Emergency Management advises and assists the President, serves as a division in the Office, as a channel of communication in the Emergency Offices, and assists the President on or before termination of an emergency with respect to measures "needful to facilitate a restoration of normal administrative relations and to ameliorate the consequences of the emergency;" to perform such other duties as the President directs; the work and activities of the following named agencies are under it:-- and then it mentions the Council of National Defense, the Defense Communications Board, the Office of Production Management.

Then there is the order by the Council of National Defense, consisting of the Secretaries of War, Navy, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Labor, revoking the old order for the purchase group and putting it in with the new Office. That is just a legal transfer of what is set up; and the other abolishes the old Priorities Board and sets up the new one.

Then they got out the "Statement by the Members of the Office

of Production Management" (which I said I would give to you over here because it will save you all time -- otherwise it would be given out over there) signed by Stimson, Knox, Knudsen, and Hillman, which is quite an important statement because it does mention the seriousness of the urgency of this emergency and asks for the help of everybody. They want cooperation from -- it doesn't say so, but they want cooperation from the Press! (Laughter) It's a very good statement.

Q Mr. President, when does this go into effect -- tomorrow night?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so; I haven't actually signed the commissions but I think I have them.

Q Will their offices be in the Federal Reserve Building?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so; I don't know.

Q Mr. President, have you named an Ambassador to Britain yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What about Norweb?

THE PRESIDENT: Norweb is going back to Peru.

Q Reuters is carrying a dispatch out of Stockholm that American troops are occupying Greenland, or have occupied it.

THE PRESIDENT: New one on me! Must have been while I was asleep! (Laughter)

Q Do you think you will be able to appoint an Ambassador to Britain this week?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I am feeling quite happy over it.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #709,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 10, 1941, 10.55 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: Don't think I have any news this morning. There was signed yesterday a proclamation, on the recommendation of the Administrator for Export Control, Colonel Maxwell, placing six additional materials under the export licensing system, on account of the defense program -- copper, brass, bronze, zinc, nickel and potash.

Q Potash?

THE PRESIDENT: Potash; it's a thing you put in whisky to make it taste.

Q When is that effective, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: February three.

Q Mr. President, is copper placed on the list because copper is reaching Germany through other countries?

THE PRESIDENT: No; just put on the list because we need it.

Q What would happen to such a thing as copper imported from Chile for refining here -- usually imported for re-export?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; has any come in for refining here?

Q Yes, a great deal.

Q Mr. President, would it be a fair interpretation of this proposed legislation to aid Great Britain to say that it has the effect of repealing the Johnson Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it would not; no.

Q Mr. President, what does that phrase "notwithstanding the provisions of any other law" refer to?

THE PRESIDENT: It is the usual phrase that goes in almost all legislation. Really, it is legal and technical; it relates to things in the profession of law known as conflict of laws. In other words, if there is a conflict on some specific point, the later law supersedes the former law, as we mentioned in the Budget Conference the other day.

Q Mr. President, should this legislation pass, will the benefits be open to Latin America?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Were we correct in saying you had given assurances destroyers would not come under this?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't see that there is any particular point in talking about that now, because nobody has suggested it, any more than anybody has -- I'll have to talk this off the record, but it might as well be said now so as to stop a whole lot of what is purely, on the part of some papers, the usual old thing known as a crusade.

Martinique -- there are some papers that are talking about Martinique as "this great and valuable base." Some of the boys have put that in because they are required to by their offices. All this talking is done by people who don't know anything about military or naval requirements. There were three fellows who were down with me about three weeks ago. This is all off the record, but it is just so people will know how dangerous and ignorant a crusade can be. For instance, I read a story in one of the papers this morning about how the Army is setting up this new command for the Caribbean and about the gap between Puerto

Rico and Trinidad -- which of course is all utter rot. There are two of these newly acquired bases in that gap, one called Antigua and the other called Sta. Lucia. Sta. Lucia is thirty-five miles from the harbor of Fort de France in Martinique. We lay about three and one-fourth miles off shore, off that harbor. It isn't a harbor for a fleet, it is an open roadstead; and you can't, in time of war, use an open roadstead for a fleet, under modern conditions, because there is no way of protecting a large number of naval vessels against torpedo plane attack, submarine attack, or destroyer attack if they are in an open roadstead. I am going back to fundamentals.

You take, on the other hand, this Jamaica base we saw; that Jamaica base is, potentially, extraordinarily valuable as a fleet anchorage -- a fleet base -- because there are those islands and reefs that lie outside of it, and by comparatively simple work you can, with a dredge, fill in the exposed part on each side, leaving a little island in the middle, with a channel on each side of the island. The result would be that you would have, inside that bay, an anchorage that you could put, perhaps not the whole United States Fleet, but nearly the whole fleet, where it would be absolutely safe because of shallow water on the two sides and two narrow channels in the middle that can be netted -- absolutely safe against submarine attack or destroyer attack or torpedo plane attack. That is a valuable bay.

Fort de France, Martinique -- I started going there in (an awful admission) 1901, and I have been there several times since. It is an open roadstead. Inside this open roadstead is a little

bit of a place called the inner harbor; you could put planes in there; you could put half a dozen destroyers in there. The French at the present time have a cruiser and an aircraft carrier inside the dike or pier; but you could not put a fleet in there. The upper reaches of the bay would be a perfectly good place for planes, both land planes on shore and seaplanes, because it has a good lea just off the beach.

That is fine, but we have an awfully good similar place just thirty-five miles away -- Sta. Lucia -- which is just as good as Martinique for land planes or seaplanes; and neither Fort of France nor Sta. Lucia was big enough for fleet anchorages.

So you see all this stuff is just pure manufactured opinions by people who have never been there. I thought I would tell you, because there is being a great deal written about "this great naval Gibraltar," or something like that.

This is still off the record -- just for your information about things we are talking about. I have got to keep this off the record: We have one perfectly terrific problem in Puerto Rico in regard to population. When we took over Puerto Rico, there were 800,000 people on that little island and already it was a bit of an economic problem in 1898; today there are nearly 2,000,000 people. In other words, better sanitation, better medical care, and so forth and so on have reduced the death rate on that island so that we are adding 40,000 people a year to the population of Puerto Rico. They are American citizens. The surplus of them are coming to the United States in pretty large numbers. They are not subject to the immigration laws.

And using that as an example of the other islands that they talk about, there are 2,000,000 people. In Martinique alone, as I remember it, there are 300,000 people down there. It will create for us a very grave economic question.

Some of the people went ashore -- I think you did, Tommy (Mr. Qualters) -- in Antigua or Sta. Lucia; they're little bits of islands, but I think they have 30 or 40 thousand people on each island. It's a very grave economic problem; and as long as we can get military bases down there -- naval bases -- that are adequate, why buy 2,000,000 headaches when we don't have to? That's the easiest way of putting it. Let's use common sense instead of a lot of this hullabaloo stuff.

Q Mr. President, it has been suggested that the United States might seek the acquisition of some islands in the mid-Pacific that don't present such problems.

THE PRESIDENT: Would they? -- that's the question; that's always the question. Of course, the more islands you have, the more islands are liable to attack by the other fellow. It goes back to what I have mentioned before -- amateur strategists, including myself! There are always two sides to that acquisition of territory; it may become a liability instead of an asset.

Q Mr. President, are you expecting -- or hoping for -- quick action on the British aid bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; of course, on this bill -- I use this as background -- on this bill I really, honestly think that speed is a great essential, because it relates primarily to the placing of new orders, and it will take a great many months before they begin

to fill those orders. In other words, every week that goes by without action on this bill means a week's delay in the placing of the order. Let's put it this way: On this bill, every week that goes by means a week's delay on the appropriation; and of course there is another thing: I always hate to be critical, but I do think we ought to do something to teach the country a little more -- I am not talking about the stories so much as the headlines -- that there's all the difference in the world between authorization and appropriation. It should be made clear that if this bill, which is to be introduced at noon today, I think -- if it goes through it is merely an authorization; we can't do anything. The Government can't do a single thing until an appropriation goes through. As somebody said to me the other day, even some of the new Congressmen don't realize the difference between an authorization and an appropriation bill.

Now, a delay of a week at any time in this stage means a delay of a week in the appropriation bill; a delay of a week in the appropriation bill means a delay of a week in placing the order; a delay of a week in placing the order means a delay of a week in getting delivery. Suppose there is something to be delivered next July that still we have got to get the money for: a week's delay today means a week's delay in July. I think it is perfectly proper not to push anybody on it -- push them around or demand; but it is proper to call attention to those very simple statements of fact. Time gained now means time gained in deliveries at the other end.

Q Is the situation sufficiently urgent to use cloture in case it runs

into difficulty?

THE PRESIDENT: That is for them to decide.

Q You said the Administration couldn't do a single thing; as I read the stories this morning, you could give them information. What I am trying to get at, does it apply only to Federal orders or to anything we do not have on hand?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know; I can't remember. As a matter of fact, most of it will be information coming from the other end, because they're getting stuff in actual war conditions and we are not.

Q Mr. President, do you propose to withhold any request for appropriations until Congress completes action on this authorization?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I have to, just like the Budget; you can't put things into the Budget that haven't been authorized by Congress.

Q Your Message to Congress refers to billions of dollars' worth.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Has any approximate estimate been set yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, I think. Giving this as background, the figures will probably be like the defense program. It is in two parts. One will be cash needed and the other is contract authorizations, for the cash would not be needed until a good deal later -- some of it even as late as the calendar year 1942.

Q Mr. President, does this plan envisage one over-all contract, for instance, say, with Great Britain, or individual contracts to meet, for instance, individual needs?

THE PRESIDENT: It couldn't be an over-all contract because things

change so from day to day. I'll just give you an illustration on that; nobody wants -- Lord knows I don't want -- the power that is apparently given in this bill, but somebody has to do it -- somebody has to have the power in such shape that quick action can be taken. It may be a matter of forty-eight hours or a week, and obviously, for a matter of five airplanes, we can't put a special bill through Congress. The example I was going to use is a matter that came up yesterday. You'll have to use X's and Y's and A's and B's. It seemed to be a pretty essential thing for the defense of democracies that are fighting for their life to get a handful, literally, of planes in a certain area -- never mind the area, never mind the nation. It became a question of speed, so we are seeing if we can't expedite by the transfer method from one nation that is fighting to another nation, this matter of this handful of planes that for military reasons seem very vital to get to a given point at a given time. I just use that as an example to show why, if the policy of the Nation is to help the democracies to survive, you have to have methods of speed that are legalized.

Q Mr. President, in a situation of that sort, you would have to have authorization to give materials on hand, not those provided for by future appropriations.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, again you run into a thing that is a little difficult to explain: Is this to apply only to future needs? I would say probably 99 percent of it, yes; but there might be a situation where you would want to swap off five old planes today to let these people have them. That is the one -- call it

a part of that one percent, as against deliveries that we know will be made two weeks hence of new planes. Now, 99 percent of it is new stuff; but there ought to be authority to make, from a military point of view and absolutely necessary and right, an exception to the rule in a percentage that would be so small that it would not affect the general rule.

Q Mr. President, is it contemplated that any agency of the Government here will be authorized to receive what might be regarded as collateral for any of the stuff going over there?

THE PRESIDENT: That is possible.

Q What agencies would be charged with what we send over and what we take?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know -- maybe the Gold Reserve in Kentucky.

Q Such records would be kept, would they not, of what is sent and brought?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I imagine it would not only be kept but checked and double checked.

Q Mr. President, there's a book called "Sea of Destiny," which tells how vulnerable we are through the Hudson Bay; have you given attention to that?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it. In the winter time that's all "friz" and in the summer time it's all full of mosquitoes.

Q This man says in the winter they can land planes on the ice.

THE PRESIDENT: I'll look into it; never thought of it before. (Laughter)

Q On Tuesday you said you expected to send up your nomination of the Ambassador to London to represent this country.

THE PRESIDENT: I have been too busy.

Q Someone referred to the emergency ship construction program you announced last week, the President's program to build 200 cargo ships, as "a bridge to Britain." Have you any comment on his statement?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't say "bridge to Britain."

Q He did.

Q Are you planning to bring Mayor LaGuardia into the defense setup?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it in the newspapers; that is the first time I had heard of it.

Q Going back to your announcement about the new export control, can you tell us to what extent they will be applied to Latin America?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask Colonel Maxwell.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #710,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 14, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news. Anybody got any news?

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the proposition to put a time limit on the lend-lease bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; because if I start commenting on one, you boys will be asking me about two or three every Tuesday and two or three every Friday; and you merely start a chain. Don't let's start one of those chains now.

Q Did you intimate, sir, the name of the new Ambassador to England?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't done anything about it. That's about all there is.

Q Have you personally made your selection for the Ambassador, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Could you tell us --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q Could you tell us, sir, whether he is acceptable to the British?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't even asked them; and he doesn't know, either.

Q He doesn't know?

THE PRESIDENT: No -- that he has been selected. Isn't that an awful mystery? You could almost write an Oppenheim novel around that -- probably <u>will</u>, so it's all right! (Laughter)

Q A lot of people uncertain, sir.

Q Would it narrow the matter down to --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes -- before you finish your question -- it would. (Laughter)

Q I didn't ask the question, but close to it, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't do any guessing; because I haven't mentioned this to anybody at all -- not even to myself out loud. (Laughter)

Q Will it be a surprise? (More laughter)

Q You may not realize it, sir, but we are trying to encourage you to mention it now.

THE PRESIDENT: Down East they would say, "You don't say!" (Continued laughter)

Q Mr. President, what lies behind the increased purchases of mercury by this country from Mexico?

THE PRESIDENT: Stocking up -- that's all. Mercury is one of those metals that we produce in very limited quantities ourselves, and it's on that list of metals -- mostly metals -- that we don't have enough reserve war stocks of, and we have been gradually building it up.

Q Could you tell us, sir, about this home defense plan you were discussing?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that we are discussing it; that's as far as we have got. There is no plan yet that has been accepted.

Q Can you tell us about the objectives in home defense you are striving for?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's to give everybody who wants to do something toward defense a method of doing his or her part, no matter where they live -- every state in the Union, every big city, small city,

town, farm, and everything else -- give them an opportunity to do their share.

Q Mr. President, has there been any agreement between Secretary Morgenthau and Chairman Eccles on Eccles' recommendation?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know; I haven't heard a word.

Q What is the status of that?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it is still being studied; I don't know.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the label that has been put on the lease-lend bill as a "blank-check" bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I suppose so; the easiest thing is, Write me another that you would not put the label on that would accomplish the same objective. That is a perfectly good answer to all these people. That is not an answer to those, at all, who talk about plowing under every fourth American child, which I regard as the most untruthful, as the most dastardly, unpatriotic thing that has ever been said. Quote me on that. That really is the rottenest thing that has been said in public life in my generation.

Q Did you say quote you on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I wasn't prepared for that. Would you repeat it, please?

THE PRESIDENT: Fred's (Mr. Essary's) ears were "wacky"; he didn't hear it. Foote, read it back, beginning with, "That is not --"

(The reporter then read the sentences referred to.)

Q May we have the question before that?

THE PRESIDENT: I said my answer on the question of the label wasn't an answer to this other thing.

Q Mr. President, where was the statement made -- the original statement?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it in the paper; it has been quoted by several people. It was quoted in one of the radio debates the other night by somebody else.

Q You say you don't remember who said it?

THE PRESIDENT: No; it was said by three or four people. In other words, it's a good time to kill a proposed slogan, at birth.

Q Plow it under!

Q Passion for anonymity!

Q Mr. President, did you receive any reports on the start of the motor strikes in Michigan -- one plant down in Saginaw -- yesterday, all dealing with defense orders?

THE PRESIDENT: All closed?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard about it.

VOICE: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #711,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 17, 1941, 10.55 A.M.

MR. REYNOLDS: Earl Godwin sent you a message, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What did he say?

MR. REYNOLDS: He said --

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Reynolds, United Press Association) Sit down.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you!

THE PRESIDENT: Just clearing the air in the front row -- that's all.

(Laughter)

Steve (Mr. Early) says I have nothing.

Q Mr. President, the impression seems to be abroad this morning that Mr. Kennedy is not entirely in favor of the lend-lease bill; I wonder if you got the same impression yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: I wonder whether the public should take a prognostication by writers or whether they should take what Mr. Kennedy says tomorrow night.

Q Mr. President, may we put the question the other way about: Do you feel that Kennedy might be for part of this bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not a columnist. (Laughter)

Q Will he talk as your -- still as your personal representative tomorrow night?

THE PRESIDENT: I said I am not a columnist. I can't give you anything at all. Wait until tomorrow night. Don't prognosticate.

Q But this is not a prognostication; I am asking whether he will still be Ambassador when he speaks tomorrow night.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I think he wants -- what shall I say? -- to speak for himself instead of having the press speak for him.

Q That's what he said, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes; I think he is entitled to.

Q Mr. President, the Times-Herald this morning said it learned from sources close to the White House that Mr. Winant is going to London.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to say the Times-Herald didn't learn that from sources close to the White House.

Q Mr. President, have you picked a time when you expect to name your Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: No; to tell you the honest truth, I have been so busy trying to write an Inaugural Address the past two days that I haven't given it any thought since last Tuesday.

Q Do you still have the same man in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (Laughter) I hadn't thought of it since Tuesday, but now you ask me, I have.

Q Mr. President, when will Harry Hopkins be back?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. When he went over, it was for two or three weeks.

Q Have you had any communication with him since?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Reports from New York say Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Willkie will talk over a joint microphone.

THE PRESIDENT: I heard one of the broadcasting systems had offered large sums of money to get Harry Hopkins to broadcast; I don't

think he will accept the offer. That's domestic news. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, the Secretary of the Navy told us the other day that he was going to try to put all navy yards on a three-shift basis, and I was wondering whether or not you contemplated any Executive Order changing the wage-hour restrictions.

THE PRESIDENT: No, not at all.

Q Are you in favor of extending navy yard operations to the three-shift basis?

THE PRESIDENT: When was it? -- last -- I think it was August -- that I announced in regard to arsenals and navy yards (it's awfully old news) that as fast as we could do it and needed to do it we were putting them on the three-shift basis. It's only five months old.

Q Mr. President, doesn't that require a change in the wage-hour restrictions?

THE PRESIDENT: Why? You have three people instead of one person; you have three shifts instead of one shift.

Q Well, I understood that the basic rule in the navy yards was forty hours, on the five-day basis.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q If you change that, can you change it by proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't have to make any change at all. Forty hours is the basic week, and anything over that is time and a half for overtime.

Q They all get it?

THE PRESIDENT: Always have -- not for five months but a good many years.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us, have you had any recent word from the British as to the urgent need for aid?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, will you revise the National Health Bill at this Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what that is.

Q There seems to be something doing around town, but nothing very tangible.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; is it the same bill as last year?

Q I understood Senator Wagner reintroduced it.

Q Mr. President, will you have any special assignment for Admiral Richardson on his return?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he was ordered to report to the Secretary; I don't know.

Q Mr. President, an Italian newspaper prints a story that the Army and Navy have submitted a confidential report to you that your aid-to-Britain policy is wrong and should not be undertaken.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose the easiest thing to say about that is that it is an Italian newspaper report. That has many connotations.

Q Mr. President, have you any thought of taking action on the Japanese Fleet's suggestion that the American Fleet be removed from Hawaii?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a Japanese newspaper report.

Q Mr. President, in San Diego a strange situation appeared to be developing around the Ryan Aircraft Company. Apparently they were about to call a strike and a member of the local draft board threatened to reclassify strikers and subject them to a draft

above their original classification; have you anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word about it, except what I read in last night's paper. You better ask the OPM.

Q Are you considering Robert Sherwood for any Government job, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of; we don't have official poet laureates in this country. He's a very old friend of mine.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the story that the lend-lease bill is written so that if it seemed necessary the British Navy could be purchased by the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'll ask you a similar question; you know something about my background. The Army complained all the time until the last year that I was altogether too much pro-American Navy. What do you think I would do? -- now, honestly? Isn't that enough of an answer? Of course it is! Also, there is nothing in the bill -- not a thing in the bill to prohibit what might be a very dangerous situation; it doesn't prevent the President of the United States from standing on his head; but the President of the United States doesn't expect to stand on his head and has no desire to stand on his head. The same way, the President of the United States, being somewhat fond of the American Navy, doesn't expect to get rid of the American Navy. Give me another one.

Q This, sir, was the other way around -- that you could acquire the British Navy, under the terms of the bill.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that's a new one! That's today's. Well, I suppose that Congress might authorize me to acquire the German Navy, too. Don't you think this is awfully, awfully cow-jumped-over-the-moon business? I do.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference with the Apostolic Delegate?

THE PRESIDENT: Hadn't seen him for two or three months.

Q The question of the lend-lease bill didn't arise in the course of the conversation?

THE PRESIDENT: Well now, <u>really</u>! (Laughter) This is entirely off the record, of course; I suppose I should have, but I didn't -- I should have discussed with him the possibility of acquiring the Vatican Navy! That's off the record.

Q Mr. President, do you have any plans for the future of the Federal Communications Commission?

H&B 8-21-56

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got around to it; I'll take it up next week.

Q Next week?

THE PRESIDENT: I mean, I will begin to start on it.

Q Will you tell us about your talk with Ann Morgan?

THE PRESIDENT: She told me about things; she was back quite recently.

Q Mr. President, since you don't intend to do any transferring of the type you have been talking about, do you have any objections to limitations in the bill on this point?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose they better put in standing on my head, too, and a lot of other things.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us why that separate section authorizes the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy to buy equipment from friendly nations -- why that is in the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I suppose, in a world that changes every twenty-four hours, something might turn up when you would have to have quick action to add to American defense. Now, don't jump at con-

clusions. I don't know; you don't know; nobody else knows. It's just a precaution, a precautionary measure aimed at the continuing of American defense; that's all.

Q Mr. President, is there any prospect of Mayor LaGuardia coming into your Administration in any capacity?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I have read a lot of political stories from New York City, and that's all I know. Never had been discussed.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #712,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 21, 1941, 4.05 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have an old-time graduate from the Press Conferences who is sitting here, representing, I believe, a paper called the P. I. I don't know what that means. It is published in Seattle. He is complaining bitterly because the morning paper out there never gets any Press Conference news. You see, when we meet on Friday mornings, it comes out in the afternoon paper in Seattle; and when we meet on Tuesday afternoon, it's the same way. I don't know what we are going to do about it unless we change the Seattle time -- unless you people are willing, when we have the afternoon conference, to reserve the news until the following morning. (Voices: No! No!)

Q You can always make up for morning paper release.

MR. BOETTIGER: That's a good idea -- or else hold the conferences at 8 o'clock. (Groans from reporters)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news at all.

Q There have been a number of stories about a possible Executive Order freezing the assets of all the countries of Europe; can you tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose that is one of many things that have been studied for a long time, and remains under study, and it hasn't got beyond that stage.

Q It was printed in one of the papers that an Executive Order had already been prepared; is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose there are probably fifty Executive Orders that have

been prepared on all kinds of things for contingencies. I suppose probably there is one in existence.

Q A good many of us today printed the Winant story, about Ambassador to London; any truth in it, sir? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't spoken to anybody about it.

MR. EARLY: Mr. Winant called a few minutes ago and asked the same question. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Did he? I think tomorrow I will probably get around to talking to somebody about it. But the children kept me up very late last night -- I am a little sleepy today.

Q There is a report that Averill Harriman might be named as Minister.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I know; there have been all kinds of reports of that kind.

Q Do you have under contemplation a plan of naming an Ambassador and a Minister?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any plans -- I'm too sleepy.

Q Are you making a build-up on this?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are making a build-up!

Q Mr. President, in the consideration of the lend-lease bill on the Hill they are constantly referring to the possibility of convoying ships; is that likely in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I said the other day I had never even considered it in any way at all, because -- of course I will have to give you this off the record -- I mean this can't -- it's got to be -- Oh, I suppose, background, as long as you don't attribute it to anybody.

Obviously, when a nation convoys ships, either its own flag or another flag, through a hostile zone, just on the doctrine of chance

there is apt to be some shooting -- pretty sure that there will be shooting -- and shooting comes awfully close to war, doesn't it?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: You can see that that is about the last thing we have in our minds. If we did anything, it might almost compel shooting to start.

Q There are reports also, Mr. President -- I think you commented on that a couple of days ago -- about the possibility of your giving the Navy away, or some part of it; can we use that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can; you can use again the old illustration that I don't want to stand on my head, and I don't think it is necessary to put the prohibition of standing on my head in the bill.

Q How about the suggestions today from Governor Stassen and, indirectly, from Mr. Kennedy that power under this bill might be given jointly to a Congressional committee and the President?

THE PRESIDENT: Have you read the Constitution?

Q Is that prohibited, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Surely.

Q Two ideas have been discussed; one is that the American Navy convoy American ships into British waters; the other is that they be convoyed to Iceland or thereabouts, where the British would then take them up. Does your remark go for both propositions?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a new one on me! How about Falkland Islands?

Q A little bit farther off.

THE PRESIDENT: How about the Celebes?

Q Better trip!

THE PRESIDENT: Got some experts here on the front row on those places.

Q Wouldn't you have that power now?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Wouldn't you have that power now?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose so -- yes. This is all, as I remarked the other day, cow-jumped-over-the-moon, Old-Mother-Hubbard stuff.

Q Can we quote you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Any comment, Mr. President, on the House action in passing that ship bill unanimously today?

THE PRESIDENT: Did they, really?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Fine! Fine!

Q Not even one vote against it.

THE PRESIDENT: Fine speed -- in spite of the fact that the ships are slow ships.

Q Ugly ducklings!

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #713,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 24, 1941, 11:05 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't give you any news if I had any, because Steve (Mr. Early) is making a speech out West, and he didn't want anything to interfere with his speech. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, Colonel Lindbergh said last night if we hadn't given our moral backing to France and Great Britain, there wouldn't have been a war in Europe; got any comments on that?

THE PRESIDENT: To tell you the honest truth, I haven't read the speech; --

Q (interposing) It's interesting.

THE PRESIDENT: Why should I?

Q Mr. President, do we understand that Lord Halifax is due in Annapolis this afternoon? We were wondering whether --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am afraid that you will have to continue to write speculative stories, because I can't give you anything positive or definite at this time. Maybe a little bit later I might have something.

Q Later in the day, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe; again <u>maybe</u>.

Q Could you tell us, sir, if and when he does arrive, whether you might go to greet him?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't even tell you that, because there is nothing definite.

Q Could you give us anything more about the designation of Mr. Currie to go to China?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except he is not feeling so well; he is taking some inoculations. There he is, on the sofa.

Q Mr. President, you said the other day you were going to speak to somebody about an Ambassador to Great Britain; have you done that speaking yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been too busy; I haven't got any news yet.

Q Have you talked to him yet, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: It's the same old thing; I can't say anything to the Press on anybody until I get what is called an agrément and until I am all ready to send a name to the Senate. That is why my face has to remain completely closed.

Q Mr. President, may I ask --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I told you it is all the same thing; I can't even tell when I ask for an agrément.

Q Mr. President, have you seen Mr. Winant today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; I saw him this morning.

Q Just a social visit? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Just a social visit.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us on the Supreme Court vacancy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so. I don't know -- I suppose as background you could intimate this: that it will save an awful lot of time and trouble for an awful lot of good people if they will refrain from sending in recommendations and endorsements and petitions and so forth and so on. I think you could rather intimate that a choice has been made but will not be announced for a long, long time -- weeks and weeks and weeks.

Q Mr. President, could we ask you why such a long time?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you could not even ask that, because you would not get an answer.

Q Mr. President, will the choice be announced after the lend-lease bill is passed? (The President laughed with the rest, but did not answer the question.)

THE PRESIDENT: That really will save an awful lot of headaches. There is not much to speculate on; but there will have to be some speculation, I suppose.

Q It may save you a lot of headaches, but it will keep us in one.

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to do it that way.

Q Mr. President, have you decided on nominations for the Transportation Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had time. I expect to take it up at the beginning of next week.

Q Mr. President, the Republican Governor of Massachusetts has given 100 percent endorsement to your lend-lease bill; I wonder if you have any comments?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't seen it.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment to make on your conference with Governor Stassen, of Minnesota, the other day?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we didn't even mention the bill.

Q Mr. President, Senator Smathers, of New Jersey, introduced a bill yesterday to ask Cuba to become the 49th State; is there any comment on the general proposition of adding a few stars to the American flag?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Cuba or Hawaii?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't want to comment on that.

Q Mr. President, there are reports through the Capitol that you might be willing to accept some limiting amendments to the lend-aid bill; any comments?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it is better not to say anything about specific amendments until they are proposed by the Committee or I am asked about them. Of course I would have to know what the language was, and I haven't had anything of that kind.

Q Are you going to the horse show tonight, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You are not?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is Dean Acheson to deal personally with British purchases?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; ask the State Department. Frankly, I don't know.

Q There seems to be a great deal of secrecy as to when and where Lord Halifax is to land; could you tell us the reason for the secrecy?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose if you were to work out your own answer, it would be that there might be human lives at stake. I think you can explain that all right. In other words, his method of arrival might be such that, as between belligerent powers, it might jeopardize human lives, one way or another -- lots of possibilities that way -- under the water, on the water, over the water.

Q Mr. President, why did you lift the moral embargo on Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: Ask the Secretary of State.

Q Mr. President, would you give the same answer to the question whether we have a common policy toward China?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know how common it is.

Q Between the United States and Russia, I mean.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know how common it is.

Q Mr. President, there were observations that Dean Acheson would do more than Mr. Grady had done in the State Department; is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the proposal of the Council of State Governments yesterday to transfer the work relief to State governments?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen it; I read the first paragraph in the paper, and as I understood it, it looks as if it just reversed the present method; is that correct?

Q I think it does.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, take over the administration, as I understood it -- I may be wrong, and if I am, tell me -- transfer all work relief to the administration of State governments and all direct relief -- people who can't work -- to the Federal Government; is that right?

Q As I understand it, sir, I think that is it.

THE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I don't get it; because that non-work-relief stuff is, essentially, the problem of the residents of the locality. There are people who can't work. It is home relief, in the ultimate sense of the word. That certainly ought never to be administered from Washington; and yet that is the way I read it in the paper. It just completely turns the present system upside down. Maybe when I see the resolution it won't mean quite that.

Q Mr. President, the Allis-Chalmers Company had a strike of 7,000 men, with $16,000,000. in Government contracts; is there anything you have to say on the policy of strikes in those defense plants?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Is that strike ended yet?

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that the strike that Father Haas went to?

Q That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all I know. There is nothing you can say about general policy, because each case is a case by itself. So far, it is very encouraging, on the whole, considering the size of the country and number of industries, the relatively small number of delays that have been caused so far by strikes -- I mean relatively.

One interesting thing, which I will have to give you off the record -- and foreign newspaper correspondents please listen: You know we have had in the past -- what, three or four weeks? -- a very small number of walk-outs, which have lasted for a very short time; and it is rather interesting that in certain foreign papers those small walk-outs have been the lead -- the front-page lead -- trying to give the impression -- well, actually, it has occurred in Italy, Germany, and in Japan -- the general impression that the whole of the United States is flat on its back, tied up with strikes; that nothing is happening, that there is no production.

I had to keep this off the record because it ought not, obviously, to come from me; but the fact remains that the impression is being given in those three countries by the press that the United States is not going ahead with its program.

That is a rather significant thing, and it is in general line with what I talked with one or two of you people individually about, that in the same state-controlled papers certain statements that are made on the Hill (never mind by whom -- you can guess) the maker of those statements has become the hero -- the front-page hero -- of those nations, with

the general intimation to their public that those people represent the overwhelming mass of American public opinion. I think it is just as well that everybody in this country should understand that those people are the heroes in Germany and Italy and Japan.

Q Is that off the record too?

THE PRESIDENT: That is off the record; but it is something you ought to know about. We think we know more about the United States than those papers intimate on the other side.

Q Mr. President, can we use that for background? -- can we use it for our own?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. It might just as well be said, because actually it is a piece of news that is worth while publishing over here. We get a certain amount of it in the papers in this country through the press association reports from those countries; but of course the press association reports don't cover more than 10 percent of what the State Department gets every day. You see from those places what might be called a summary of the news and editorial statements in those papers; but while it has been printed in this country, I don't think half enough emphasis has ever been given to it. The real truth ought to be told, and there is no reason you people who cover the State Department should not have (Mr. McDermott) it. Get Mac/to take care of it for you. There is no particular reason why these dispatches from the other side, a great many of them, should not be made available to anybody who is interested and who is covering the State Department. It may duplicate our own Press Association news a bit, but it will certainly supplement the press association news that comes through -- at the tip!

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #714,
Executive Offices of the White House,
January 31, 1941, 4.20, P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) assured me there is nothing, and I am afraid he is right.

Q Mr. President, have you made any plans to go down to Annapolis on the seventh to address the midyear graduating class?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I told them I was very sorry I couldn't do it.

Q Mr. President, is Ambassador Johnson coming back from China for any reason?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think -- has the State Department given out anything on that?

Q Secretary Hull said this morning it was a White House question.

THE PRESIDENT: I would be very glad to tell you what was done if it is all right with the State Department.

Q They referred it to you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Have all the agréments been done? -- I couldn't tell you unless the agréments have been acquired.

Q They indicated it was a White House story.

THE PRESIDENT: That is not quite authority enough. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, is it true that Ambassador Johnson is being transferred to some other post?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you anything about it, because I have got to find out first from the State Department if the agréments have been received.

Q There is probably somebody from the State Department here who could let

you know.

THE PRESIDENT: Is Mc. here? (referring to Mr. McDermott)

Q Mc. is sick.

Q Mr. President, have you noticed the story of Ambassador Dodd appearing in a magazine, reporting his diary? He apparently attended a dinner at Mr. Tugwell's house, and at that dinner the statement was made that one of the Senators advocated the domination of Europe by the Nazis; and --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Bob did? -- Tugwell did? -- who did?

Q I am about to ask you, sir? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, come out with it -- who was the Senator? You know all about the dinner; who was there?

Q I read this in the paper, sir. (Laughter) I also read that the Ambassador had lunch with you the next day, and that you guessed the Senator's name.

THE PRESIDENT: I what?

Q You guessed the Senator's name.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I didn't guess the Senator's name at the time; you know it, too.

Q No, I <u>don't</u> know it! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Don't be mysterious; go on and tell us the whole story, because everybody knows the whole story; don't make me tell it -- <u>you</u> tell it.

Q I think it would be much better if you told it, sir! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: If you will ask me the question as to whether such a thing was told to me -- who the people were -- I would answer the question; but I am not going to be responsible, obviously, for breaking this story

that is coming out in the magazine. If you will tell me the whole story, I will give you a story; that's a fair proposition.

Q Mr. President, Ambassador Dodd's son was one of those who said it was Burton Wheeler; and Carter Glass was there; was that true?

THE PRESIDENT: What did the diary say?

Q The diary didn't name the Senators.

Q That's what Bill Dodd said -- that it was Burton Wheeler and Carter Glass who were there.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this was way back somewhere around, I should say at a guess, 1934. As long as you have asked me if I knew about the story, and have given the names of the people, Ambassador Dodd, you say -- now this is not from me -- the two of you say -- went out and dined at -- was it Tugwell's house? --

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And that at Tugwell's house, Ambassador Dodd put down in his diary afterwards that he had had a talk with several people, including a Senator, whom Ambassador Dodd's son identified as Senator Wheeler. That is all <u>your</u> story; <u>my</u> story is that Dodd told me that same thing the next day.

Q Mr. President, speaking of ambassadors, has there been a selection for London yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I am glad you reminded me!

Q I had every intention of it, sir! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh! I'll have to do something about that Monday!

Q Mr. President, in this Dodd story, I think Blair Moody spoke of a Senator who had said something about Nazi domination of Europe; did that occur in your own conversation?

THE PRESIDENT: It did.

Q With respect to Senator Wheeler?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; and furthermore -- I was pretty careful to check on it at the time -- that the safety of the United States, in such a probable event, lay in the United States taking over -- those were the words used, or occupying, I think it was the words "taking over" -- Canada and Mexico and the five Central American Republics.

Q Is it asserted here, Mr. President, that Senator Wheeler was in favor of the Nazi domination of Europe?

THE PRESIDENT: Said it was inevitable.

Q Not that he favored it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what does one do if he has made up his mind that a thing is inevitable? That's a pretty comprehensive word -- the word "inevitable"; you can't even "kick against the pricks", as St. Paul would have said.

Q Were the names of the five Central American states mentioned?

THE PRESIDENT: The five Central American Republics.

Q With regard to the House action on naval convoys and the lend-lease bill, if Congress takes any action that infringes on the President's rights, is that binding on the President?

THE PRESIDENT: You're getting awfully "iffy", by your own admission; you used the word.

Q Now that the others have explained what the Wheeler story is, will you tell us more about it?

THE PRESIDENT: That is -- what do you call it? -- a corroborative witness; I am corroborating.

Q Mr. President, how long ago was it Mr. Dodd told you about this?

THE PRESIDENT: My recollection is that it was away back around -- it was when he came back for a vacation -- I should say in 1934. It might have been 1935, but I am inclined to think 1934.

Q Was it Tugwell's house here or in New York?

(The President hesitated a moment, and another reporter replied that it was here in Washington.)

Q Have you reason to believe that still represents the opinion of the Senator?

THE PRESIDENT: That's an "if" question.

Q When you appoint an Ambassador to Britain, will there also be a minister appointed?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it.

Q Can you tell us anything, sir, about these reports that S. Clay Williams would be the minister?

THE PRESIDENT: I would not do any guessing on that.

Q Mr. President, the story was printed this morning that twenty destroyers would be traded for a British battleship.

THE PRESIDENT: Somebody representing a Detroit paper invented that one.

(Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you any plans to use Tommy Corcoran in a defense post?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of; had him in to lunch today and congratulated him on the birth of his daughter.

Q Is he coming into the Government again?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; we talked about the baby. (Laughter)

Q Talk about its support, sir? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You are verging on the vulgar! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, any comment on this action of the War Department with

reference to the Ford Motor Company?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I knew nothing about it until I read it in the paper this morning.

Q Mr. President, in your fireside chat last month you said that the notion of "business as usual" must go; do you --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Did I say that?

Q Yes, you did, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It doesn't sound like me. (Laughter) You would have to bring me a copy, for I don't think those are the words.

Q Mr. President, with reference to the Sherman anti-trust suits in connection with international patent control, would you say you would advocate changing our patent laws to avoid having anything like that happen a third time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Paul (Mr. Leach), frankly, that was a matter that we discussed a little at the Cabinet Meeting. It is largely a legal question as to what rights the Government has in developing a very large defense program to use -- take over -- patent properties, either domestically owned or foreign owned, in peacetime, just in the same way that they would have the right under existing law to take over a factory where the owners of the factory were not doing what they had been asked to do by the Government. Of course the right of the Government to do it in the case of the factory is well established in law, and whether that same right under the language of the law applies to patents, which are just as essential to the manufacture of an article as a factory is, that is the thing we are studying at the present time. I couldn't tell you anything more than that, because I don't know.

Q Mr. President, if the Ford plants become essential to armaments produc-

tion, and this situation continues to exist, is the Government prepared to take them over?

THE PRESIDENT: If you leave out "Ford plants" and say "any plants", I would say Yes.

Q Mr. President, there has been a bill introduced in the Senate today that would require a waiting period before any strike takes place. It is very much like the law that has been in operation in Minnesota and has been for several years very successful; I wonder if you have any ideas on it?

THE PRESIDENT: What was it -- a Navy bill or Army bill?

Q No, it was introduced by Senator Ball of Minnesota to apply only to defense industries.

(The President paused a moment.)

Q Are you familiar, sir, with Carl Vinson's bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are you familiar with it?

THE PRESIDENT: Only in very general terms, of course. As I understand it, the bill would apply to defense industries a waiting period; really, that exists today. The Vinson bill refers to the railroad brotherhoods, and at the same time I am told (I haven't read the bill) it contains a lot of other little clauses that ought to be looked into very carefully. (Laughter)

Q It has one clause, sir, which prevents an open shop. It interferes with the open-shop principle and theory.

THE PRESIDENT: I was told that it ought to be read through, clause by clause.

Q Mr. President, what do you think of the mediation idea?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What do you think of the mediation idea, the waiting-period idea?

THE PRESIDENT: It is one method; there are a great many.

Q Mr. President, did Hitler's speech make any particular impression on you?

THE PRESIDENT: Must I tell you the truth?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't read it; I was too busy having a birthday. (Laughter)

Q It was meant for your birthday, sir!

THE PRESIDENT: Was it? (Laughter)

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't opened all my presents yet! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you a lot of Executive Orders ready to sign when the lend-lease bill goes through?

THE PRESIDENT: None. Nothing has been prepared at all.

Q Is the appointment to the Supreme Court still weeks away?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #715,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 4, 1941, 4.20 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I know so much today that I will have to adopt the attitude of knowing nothing. I have been trying to find out what a kipskin was. I issued a proclamation placing well and refining machinery, radium, uranium, and calf and kip skins under the export licensing system; and apparently you have all been to the dictionary and found it is a form of kid -- not human. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference today with Secretaries Hull and Knox?

THE PRESIDENT: Just the usual thing.

Q Mr. President, last Friday you told us if you could get clearance from the State Department you might have some information for us on Nelson Johnson.

THE PRESIDENT: They have a story on those appointments and several others, which came in yesterday afternoon too late for me to get up to the Senate until it comes up the next time they meet, which is day after tomorrow; otherwise, I would give it to you today.

Q In that connection, do you expect to see Mr. Winant within the next day or so?

THE PRESIDENT: You are too obvious! (Laughter)

Q I understand he arrived in town today.

(The President did not reply.)

Q Mr. President, is our Diplomatic Mission in Australia to be raised to the status of an Embassy?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no, never heard of that.

Q Mr. President, there were a large number of confidential civil service files removed by unauthorized persons; anything to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Ask the Department of Justice, Edgar Hoover, and Civil Service -- which has not caught up with itself yet, running around!

Q Mr. President, I would like to ask if you could comment on that situation in Missouri whereby the Governor is being kept out of office.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I wish I knew as much about it as you do; I wish you would give me the information you have.

(The reporter made no reply.)

Q Mr. President, is there any possibility of an economic defense committee being set up in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it.

Q Mr. President, there were reports this morning that Donald Nelson submitted his resignation when he came in to see you yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: He did not -- nothing like it.

Q Mr. President, when, as, and if the lend-lease bill is adopted approximately as it is now written, what is the first thing you can do under that bill that you now can't do, or what is the first aid that the democracies can get or will get that they could not now get?

THE PRESIDENT: Go out in the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue and stand on my head; because that is not yet prohibited! (Laughter)

Q How will that aid these democracies?

THE PRESIDENT: It might get favorable publicity!

Q If you would find a nice, rainy day, the boys would like to go with you.

Q What about a report you have planned for a post in the defense set-up for Mr. Willkie?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it -- not even in the London paper!

Q Planning any traveling soon?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q There have been stories of your going to Mexico.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of that, either -- oh, yes, they came from -- I know where. (Referring to Mr. Maverick)

Q There is a vacancy soon on the Eighth Judicial Circuit; any appointment yet? I believe it is coming up Thursday.

THE PRESIDENT: No; hasn't been decided yet.

Q Mr. President, is there any development imminent regarding the freezing of foreign funds?

THE PRESIDENT: Regarding the what?

Q Freezing of foreign funds; there are rumors in New York of some possible step toward the freezing of foreign funds.

THE PRESIDENT: No; I talked about that some ten days ago; haven't heard of it since.

Q Any decision reached on patent control?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Any change in Bonneville Power status? I understand when that agency was set up it was independent; then it was put under the Secretary of the Interior; and I heard on the Pacific Coast the other day that the War Department would take it over. Is there any truth in that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not in that. I will tell you what may have given rise to it. It had nothing to do with the War Department -- merely development of the whole idea. That started six or seven years ago. If the TVA worked out as a watershed development for the benefit of the people who lived in the watershed -- mind you, this has nothing to do with any one specific thing, because it covers so many things; it is

not just power or navigation or irrigation or flood control or planting trees or building check dams, but it relates to the general welfare of the people who live in that district, with all those component things that go with human life; and the general feeling back there was that if it worked we might extend the idea of the economic and social development of an entire watershed in other places. And at that time -- it's awfully old stuff, but it has come to a head again, and we talked it over; and I think if you will go back in the old Press Conference Reports you will find that somewhere back there I suggested that if it worked in one place, we could try to work it out in other watersheds.

We didn't want to undertake too large an area, and at that time we rather thought that the Arkansas Watershed was a proper and logical one to try, because the Arkansas River runs all the way from the Mississippi clear back to the middle of the State of Colorado, up through past Pueblo, where they had those bad floods, and away on back through the Royal Gorge; and from Colorado it runs down through the Arkansas area at the eastern slope of the Rockies and flows out to the dust bowl area of eastern Colorado and over into Kansas; and from Kansas over into Oklahoma, and then on down to lower Arkansas, in the south end of the State of Arkansas; so that you have all kinds of problems, not just one but eight or ten entirely separate problems in that one watershed, where they grow all kinds of produce from cotton to cattle.

Away back -- I guess it was '34 -- we talked about the Arkansas Valley as being a proper one to take up this general idea in, and then because we went ahead on certain public works out in the Northwest they got the idea we would extend the plan to the Northwest. We talked about a Columbia River Watershed plan because it was relatively a small area.

That would include the watershed that runs into Puget Sound.

Both of those projects are being discussed on the Hill at the present time -- the idea of setting up some sort of authority to cover each of those places, but certainly not to put any one thing under the War Department, because that would be just power. This goes much further than power.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President, is there any comment on the Supreme Court decision yesterday on the wage-hour case?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Or the anti-trust cases? (The President shook his head.)

Q Mr. President, Senator Wheeler issued a statement last night saying that the Army and Navy are being denuded of airplanes, that four-fifths of the first-line planes are going to Britian; is there any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course you can work out all kinds of things with figures, official and unofficial. It must be very satisfactory to the Reichschancellor (Hitler).

Q Mr. President, a member of the Defense Commission has suggested an amendment to the lend-lease bill by which Great Britian would be required to purchase a normal quantity of agricultural imports in exchange for the benefits of the bill; would you approve of that amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't like to comment on amendments, except, off the record, I should say that they are approaching the problem of helping the American agriculture from exactly the wrong angle. Call that off the record, because, after all, I don't want to comment on these various amendments; if I once start, I am gone.

Q Can you tell us whether the development of magnesium is dependent on the completion of the anti-trust proceedings?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say it was not. We are going at it.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #716,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 7, 1941, 10.55 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) says I haven't got a thing.

Q Where is he? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you talked with anybody on the Hill about the Dirksen amendment to the lend-lease bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What do you think of the principle?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't talk about all these amendments.

Q Mr. President, may I bring up a matter that is of great interest to the members of the Conference? I --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Fingerprinting? Is it fingerprinting? (Laughter)

Q Fingerprinting, exactly, plus "mugging".

THE PRESIDENT: Do they take you side and front, both? (Laughter)

Q But the point is, we have all been "mugged" and all been fingerprinted in the last three days -- very successfully, I hope -- and --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hope so! (Laughter)

Q And we trust, sir, that that will be enough for the entire executive end of the Government, that we will not have to do this in the Navy, Army, and State Department and elsewhere -- that the same card, the same identification, will be satisfactory to them that is satisfactory to the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is a very reasonable suggestion; and if Steve (Mr. Early) will take that up right away, we will try to get it done;

that is a grand idea.

VOICES: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! (Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: What happens if you get your face lifted in between? (Laughter)

Q In between what?

Q That introduces a brand new question, sir! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there any special reason you could give us for the naming of the cruisers for the islands and territories of the United States, including the Philippines? Some comment has been caused by that.

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that we are getting so many ships now it is awfully hard to find names; that's the size of it. You know we have certain rules -- I don't know whether it is a law -- to name battleships after States and cruisers after cities and territories.

Q Mr. President, Colonel McCormick said before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday that the geographical and strategical position of the United States is such that any talk of foreign invasion was ridiculous;--

THE PRESIDENT: I want to ask you one question back: Did he speak as an expert? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, it might be interesting to everybody if you agreed to tell us some of the reasons and the characteristics in the appointment of Mr. Winant as Ambassador; that is an interesting appointment, an interesting man.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think I could only say something for background, Earl (Mr. Godwin); I think it is a great mistake to make a lead in any story that he was a Republican; he was appointed because he was an American. I think there is a nice distinction there. (Laughter) He was not appointed because he was a Republican.

Q You better make that background! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It is background; I could say that same thing if he was a Democrat -- he was appointed because he was an American of very wide experience, experience in an executive office in one of the States, experience afterwards in social service set-up, and afterwards internationally in the International Labor Office in Geneva. In other words, he had an extremely good background as an American, regardless of what party he belonged to. I realize that this is Washington and people do have to talk about Republicans and Democrats; but in a crisis like this I don't think it is a very good line to take. An ambassador represents Republicans and Democrats and people who are not enrolled in any party; he represents all Americans.

Q Sir, I didn't intend --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, he had a lot of experience that fitted him for the job.

Q I had this in mind -- didn't have any idea about politics, but here is a changing situation -- social structure here and abroad, and here was a man who seems to be out in front on some of that stuff; and I wondered if that had anything to do with it.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. He is broader than Washington, D. C. That's an awful thing to say, but you know what I mean. He does represent this country pretty well with certain changing situations which most of us have come to recognize the existence of, which can be worked into the constitutional and democratic form of government that we happen to live under, without the necessity of revolution or dictatorship. I think he represents that, shall I say, fact that is going on in our midst and in a great many other places in the world -- he represents that fact pretty well.

Q Mr. President, do you contemplate the appointment of a minister to Great Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether there is any possibility of an interdepartmental committee being established to handle economic defense problems?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean by economic defense? Everything is economic defense.

Q I mean such things as what we will ship to Britain, particularly coordinating the export control system with the Treasury power.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't say yes, and I couldn't say no, because there are a great many things in process. I should doubt very much if it would take that form. In other words, we are perfecting machinery on foreign trade and on domestic trade all the time, and undoubtedly there will be various new forms of organization that will be necessary, because of changing conditions or because the times are ripe to do it. I don't think there will be anything exactly the way you suggest; I know what you are talking about. I doubt it.

Q Do you plan any more diplomatic appointments within the next few days?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so.

Q Do we understand you are <u>not</u> going to appoint a minister to England?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to keep it off the record, because I haven't decided yet, but we might make Herschel Johnson, who is now the Counselor -- give him ministerial rank; it has not been decided -- hasn't been taken up with the British.

Q When is Mr. Winant going, do you know?

THE PRESIDENT: About ten days.

Q Is he going on the clipper, or will he go on a battleship?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; he is coming in to see me this afternoon.

Q When is Mr. Hopkins coming back?

THE PRESIDENT: Pretty soon, I think; I don't know when, and I don't know which route.

Q Will there be any extra advisers sent over with the Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: No; there are people going over all the time.

Q Has Mr. Hopkins been studying the way that Britain is handling her war -- medical and social changes in addition to other matters he may have looked into?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any idea.

Q Are you going to see Colonel Donovan when he returns?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so; but I don't know when he is coming back.

Q Has he any official status?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no.

Q There is a story that Ben Cohen might go to Britain as Counsellor.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know about that.

Q Mr. President, when is your engagement with Mr. Willkie?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any.

Q You said you were going to see him. I think he is expected at the Capitol.

THE PRESIDENT: I see almost everybody that comes back; I would be delighted to see him as soon as he comes down here.

Q Mr. President, you proposed that Ambassador Biddle in London should be not only our representative with England but also with other nations operating from there; but he was not mentioned as the representative with the Czechoslovakian Government; what is the reason for that?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess you better ask the State Department about that; I

think that is one of those diplomatic technicalities the State Department better talk about, not I.

Q Have you any comment on this Montevideo Conference -- this regional South American Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't followed it closely; I don't know how they are getting along now.

Q They have made an agreement.

THE PRESIDENT: Have they?

Q There has been speculation as to where the new Baltimore highway will be built, whether most of it would run through land already belonging to the Government. Can you tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Between New York and Washington?

Q No, the section between Baltimore and Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard anything about that. I will give you a story on this, because it is just being started now.

As you know, one of the things that we have been thinking about is what happens in this country when we begin to slow down, reduce our defense employment. You remember in 1918, on the eleventh of November, we didn't stop all the employment on defense work. The policy at that time was to make no new contracts after the armistice, and the policy was also to hold up production where contracts had been given but the production itself had not started; but the policy was to continue to completion almost everything that had been actually ordered and was in production.

The result was that during the following year, '19, and even the first half of '20, employment in the United States on defense work decreased rather gradually. It wasn't cutting everybody off on any one

given date or in a month; and the aftermath, the economic aftermath of the war in 1920 was fairly serious but not as bad as it might have been.

At the end of the present fighting, which has to come some day, there will be a slowing-up on defense work, and we have been trying to guard against what would happen at that time to the people who are employed on defense work; so we are starting this reservoir of projects which will be, insofar as possible, ready to shoot, to take up some of the slack, doing it gradually, but we would like to have them in such shape that we know where we are going; and that is why, as a general proposition you may see at this session certain authorization bills for various things going through Congress, which means that Congress very appropriately will decide on the type of work that is to be done when that time comes.

That is an authorization, which does not mean an appropriation, which is an entirely different matter; but it means that the project has been duly authorized and will be put on the shelf, ready to take out when the end comes, all then being needed is an appropriation from Congress.

One of those, you might say, divisions of things on the shelf will be highways; and Mr. Commissioner MacDonald is coming in to see me today at 12.15 to talk about this whole subject of certain through national highways, which we talked about for a great many years -- I think it goes back to the spring of 1933 -- and in that discussion we will talk about, first of all, the needs of the country, both military and civil, in times of peace, for these highways.

And we will talk about the principle of excess condemnation that

we have talked about many times before, by which the -- what do they call it? -- the added increment that accrues to real estate along a new road that is put through virgin territory -- that that added increment which is a mere matter of chance whether you happen to own the farm next to it or five miles away-- if you are five miles away, you are out of luck, and if you are right on the new highway, you may suddenly find the value of your farm increased from $5,000. to $20,000.

It seems to be constitutional -- it has been done in several States -- for the Government to buy more land than it needs for the 100-foot or 200-foot right of way and then, over a period of years, sell this land, after having paid for it the reasonable going price of the land at the time, and the Government gets the benefit of the increase in valuation on that land, and in that way pays back either a large part or the whole of the capital cost of the highway.

It has been done in a great many places, and we are talking about that today. That ties in, of course, with your question about this Baltimore road which is merely a local proposition. It might not be anywhere near Camp Meade -- it might be ten miles away -- I don't know. It is a matter for study; but of course there probably would be some provision for a national highway, for example, on the Atlantic Coast; whether it would be right along Chesapeake Bay, close to the shore line of the Bay, or whether it would be twenty miles back or fifty miles back, I don't know.

Q Whole length of the coast?

THE PRESIDENT: Whole length of the coast.

Q That sounds as though this local project is on the shelf until after the emergency; is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I couldn't tell.

Q What other projects might fall into that category -- hospitals, airports, housing?

THE PRESIDENT: Possibly; any kind of public work, but of course especially trying to build public works in which there would be some kind of a return of capital to the Government.

Q Mr. President, might it not prove necessary to build some of these highways at the present time in the interests of national defense rather than taking up the economic shock at the end of the emergency? They are complaining about the transportation problem between Washington, New York, and Boston -- inadequate highway.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, does the Transportation Division of the Advisory Council admit that?

Q I think almost everybody who uses the road admits it, sir! (Laughter)

Q People get lost in Philadelphia, sir!

THE PRESIDENT: I know it! (Laughter) But all you have to do is show your fingerprint and you're all right! (Laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #717,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 11, 1941, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: It is correctly suggested by the people in the front row that you are at the wrong end of Pennsylvania Avenue this afternoon; why you are here I don't know, because I haven't any news at all.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Willkie said at the Capitol this afternoon that he thought we ought to lend from five to ten destroyers a month to Great Britain; have you any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to see the testimony before I could comment.

Q Did you see it before it was delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q There was a delay in their hearing of Mr. Willkie.

THE PRESIDENT: What time are they supposed to be through? I am just thinking of my own time table, because I have the Army and Navy Reception tonight, with a very early supper beforehand, and I wanted to have a good talk with Mr. Willkie to get all the information he could give me and tell me all about his trip. I was saying to "Pa" (General Watson) just before you came in, if the Senators keep him there until very late, I am going to ask him to wait and come in the morning, on account of this reception tonight. I suppose if he gets through in the course of the next fifteen or twenty minutes I will have time to see him.

Q They just began questioning him, sir, and it looks as if they would keep him going.

Q Alf Landon got back into Topeka after testifying before the committee, and he says there is a bitter controversy, particularly among the dollar-

a-year men, and he says it centers around the fact that big business is interested in promoting its own business rather than taking advantage of the facilities of small plants.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he specify?

Q Not to my knowledge.

THE PRESIDENT: Then how can I say anything about that general statement? It sounds almost like a columnist! (Laughter)

Q Haven't you seen any evidence of controversy?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't discuss things like that at all, when they are written that way.

Q Is it true that Leon Henderson is "running out" on the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I think poor old Leon ran out of health; he is just about all in.

Q Mr. President, could you help us get an interview with Mr. Hopkins after he gets back?

THE PRESIDENT: You let me talk to him first, and then I'll tell you.

Q When do you expect him?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he gets in Friday.

Q Does the lease-lend bill give authority to negotiate the St. Lawrence seaway pact with Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't quite get the connection.

Q Some people think it will authorize the seaway deal with Canada.

THE PRESIDENT: That's along the line of standing on my head in the middle of Pennsylvania Avenue. Any St. Lawrence deal obviously would go to the Congress.

Q Mr. President, have you arranged the date yet to receive the credentials of the new Japanese Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: No; but I suppose I will do it tomorrow. I am going to try to arrange it tomorrow. He is an old friend of mine.

Q Mr. President, there is considerable fear among the citizens' associations in Washington about the alleged plans of the War Department to rope off certain sections and keep the enlisted men out of them; have you heard anything about these plans?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw a map in the paper. (Laughter)

Q Who are you going to have to check on that?

(No reply)

Q Mr. President, if the United States should have to get into the war in the Far East, would that affect our help to Britain -- deliveries?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that is an awfully "iffy" question; but I don't see why I should not answer that, because it is perfectly obvious that the answer is, No, it will not affect deliveries to England.

Q Could you elaborate on that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could you elaborate on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, what is the present status of the volunteer home defense plans you talked to us about several times?

THE PRESIDENT: Still under study. I hope to get something soon. I haven't had a chance to read the latest report that came in about two days ago, and it is still in my desk. I hope to get at it the next day or two.

Q Anything you can tell us on the French situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I didn't know anything about it until I read it in the paper.

Q Referring again to the St. Lawrence -- will it be after the lend-lease

bill will be out of the way, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Tell me when the lend-lease bill is going through.

Q They are talking about March 1.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't done anything on the St. Lawrence matter for weeks.

Q You had a conference last week with some men in the S.E.C. and the Deposit Insurance on how to get more money into the financing of public utilities; any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: I would not say it was about that; it was about a whole lot of mutual problems of that kind -- banking problems, and investment problems. It was just one little thing out of twenty.

Q Mr. President, since you answered Mr. Leach's question about deliveries if we get into war in the Pacific, do you think there is danger of war there?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I do not.

Q That would become a very vital question if there were pressure over there. If we were under pressure in the Pacific, it would be a very vital question as to what we would do.

THE PRESIDENT: That is true; but I think the answer to that question stands. I was asked if I could elaborate: No, I can't, because that becomes much more "iffy" than the question,"If we were forced into a war in the Pacific, would we have to curtail deliveries to England?" The answer to that is, No, we would not have to.

Q Mr. President, there is a vacancy on the Puerto Rican Supreme Court; have you decided whom you are going to appoint for that?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I think the matter now is being handled by the Secretary of the Interior and the Attorney General.

Q There is also a vacancy on the Communications Commission; have you decided on anyone for that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't.

Q Is it still to be some time before we hear about the Supreme Court appointment?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q To jump back to the Far East, may we infer from your answer that --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wouldn't do any inferring. It's a perfectly straight question and a perfectly straight answer.

Q Then may we --

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (Laughter) I have said I won't elaborate and that any elaboration gets too "iffy" to talk about.

Q Mr. President, this morning at the Foreign Relations Committee hearing Mayor LaGuardia testified that the Committee of American Defense plans are complete, all but assuming the equipment and personnel are available; can you give us any light on that? Do we have a joint defense plan with Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess you know as much about it as I do. That is what the Commission was set up for. They have gone ahead with their work and I suppose they will continue. It is a continuing thing. It is not just to make one report.

Q Have they reported to you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I hear about every meeting. Every time they meet I get a report on it, not an official report, but they are making progress with each meeting and they will continue to do it. You remember last August when that thing was set up, it was not meant to be just a single study with a report; it was meant to be a continuing body.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #718,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 14, 1941, 10.40 A.M.

(The Grand Duchess Charlotte of Luxembourg, Prince Felix, the hereditary Grand Duke Jean, and Lieutenant Konsbruck, an aide, were present at the Press Conference.)

(Just before the correspondents were admitted, seven Chilean newspaper men were introduced to the President, as follows: Manuel Vega, Rafael Valdivieso, Carlos Eastman, Francisco le Dantec, Joaquin Muirhead, Guillermo Valenzuela, and Luis Ignacio Silva.)

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I have just had the pleasure of welcoming seven working newspapermen from our sister republic of Chile. They have come up here for a month or so to be working newspapermen on American papers and at the same time, using the reciprocal method, they are representing Chilean papers, and they are acting as a vehicle of exchange of information between the two countries. I think it is a perfectly splendid idea, and I hope that other members of the working press from other American republics will follow this very good example. I am going to turn them over to the working press of Washington, D. C., and I feel very sure that you will give them every facility of the White House Correspondents' Association. And I may say this to these gentlemen from Chile, I hope very much that we can reciprocate by sending seven American working newspapermen down to Chile; in other words, it works both ways. I am --

Q (Miss Black) (interposing) Mr. President, how about a woman in that?

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I am quite sure that our people will gain by a trip to Chile.

MR. REYNOLDS: Mr. President, in behalf of the White House Correspondents'

Association, we also want to welcome the working correspondents from Chile. We are glad to offer them our facilities.

Q Mr. President, are there seven working newspapermen in Washington?

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: While you are here you will be very welcome at these Press Conferences twice a week.

Q Mr. President, if I recall correctly, one of your ancestors was on a ship that went to the Chilean coast?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that in Chile there are a great many descendants of an old New England cousin of mine by the name of Delano who went down there. I think it was on a whaling voyage at the time of the independence of Chile, and he got so much interested that instead of going after whales he went after Spaniards; and I think his whaling ship became a frigate in the Chilean Navy, and I think he became a captain in the Chilean Navy. Anyway, he married down there. One of the Chilean Ambassadors years ago, when I was first here, told me he had a very large number of Delano descendants; so I have a lot of cousins down there.

MR. LUIS I. SILVA: Mr. President, may I say a word to you? One of my brothers is married in Chile to a member of the Delano family!

THE PRESIDENT: Good! Good! Another cousin! (Laughter)

Q Are there any of those in politics in Chile, Mr. President? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I would not say no! (More laughter)

Q Mr. President, have any of your travels in the Pacific extended south of the Galapagos Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I was going south to Ecuador and Peru and Chile in the autumn of 1939, which would have been beautiful springtime down in Chile; but of course we know things happened and I was unable to carry out the

trip, and so I will have to defer it until the world is a little more at peace. I hope to go sometime.

Q Mr. President, there is a vacancy of several weeks' standing on the Public Utilities Commission. That is one of your appointments; do you happen to know anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't. I didn't even know it.

Q Can you clear up the misunderstanding or seeming difference between you and Mr. Willkie and Secretary Knox on the destroyers?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news on it -- any more than what Steve (Mr. Early) said last night.

Q Mr. President, the Times said those destroyers are available; is it a question of timing?

THE PRESIDENT: There are a great many things in this that none of you know about -- factors, I think Steve (Mr. Early) said last night, or elements which are not news.

Q You know what the factors are, as far as the public has them, and that statement of Mr. Early still stands?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; and it may for some time.

Q Mr. President, is there anything new on the St. Lawrence Waterway?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word. I hope to see Mr. Berle (Assistant Secretary of State) on that the beginning of the week. I really don't know what the status is.

Q Mr. President, Chester Davis has written a letter to Senator Norris in which he says there has been a failure in some of the decentralization efforts of the National Defense, because the War and Navy Departments determine the sites. Could you say if there are going to be any efforts in decentralization?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't talk on that because it is a generality.

Q Would you agree that there has has been a failure on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; that is too general a question.

Q Have you decided on a new chairman for the S.E.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think it is up to them; I don't think I appoint the chairman.

Q Is there anything you can tell us on the Allis-Chalmers thing, since you had your talk with Mr. Hillman the other day?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word.

Q Is there anything to add to what you said on Tuesday about the situation in the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: No; the Japanese Ambassador is coming in -- is it today? --

MR. EARLY: Yes, twelve o'clock.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- at twelve o'clock today, with the Secretary of State, to present his credentials. I don't think there is any other news at all.

Q Mr. President, do you know of any other pending vacancy in the S.E.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is that another request for Americans who are non-essential to American interests to return to this country, reflecting an increasing gravity in the situation, or is that merely a routine repetition of the previous warning?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a repetition of the previous warning; I think you will have to ask the State Department before you use any adjective.

Q Mr. President, suddenly in the news as it comes to us, there is a very ominous picture or rumor arising as if from the horizon over there; you are aware of that, I presume, in the news; is there anything you can

add to it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think not. I think sometimes (this is off the record) when certain situations seem to develop -- with the emphasis on the word seem -- it is better not to say very much.

Q Mr. President, the New York Times on February twelfth quoted word from Bertram Cruger, representing the British War Relief Association to the United States, as saying in London he had had a conference with you and you had expressed the statement that if Britain could hold out until summer, they could probably win in five or six months; do you care to comment?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #719,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 18, 1941, 4.05 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is much news that you haven't already got. You saw Averell Harriman when he went out, and that is a thing that has been in the process of discussion for a month or six weeks; and finally, when Harry Hopkins came back, what we thought probably would be a need has rather definitely become a need; so Averell Harriman is going over in about ten days. As soon as the Defense Program under the lend-spend, lend-lease -- whatever you call it -- bill is perfected more or less, he will go over and -- Oh, I suppose you will all ask about his title, so I thought I would invent one; I talked over with him what his title would be, and we decided it was a pretty good idea to call him an "Expediter". There's a new one for you. I believe it is not in the diplomatic list or any other list. So he will go over as "Defense Expediter".

Q What is the salary on that?

(The President did not reply.)

THE PRESIDENT: That doesn't conform with anything you ever heard of before -- but that doesn't mean it isn't an excellent idea. We won't send his name to the Senate -- it won't be that kind of job; and that is neither here nor there. He will be Defense Expediter, and he is going in about two weeks.

Q Is this a permanent proposition?

THE PRESIDENT: No; we talked it over and both agreed that he probably ought to come back here at the end of, say, three months or four months to

take what they call in industry a "refresher course" to find out what has happened over here and bring himself up to date in regard to the American production program, and then go on back.

Q He anticipates there will be contracts, understandings, and agreements, and so forth under the lease-lend?

THE PRESIDENT: Most of that contract work will be ours over here.

Q I mean somebody has to keep the records to find what they are getting.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; and another thing that Hopkins took up was the matter of priorities. I had a very interesting talk this morning, just to give you a new slant on priorities, with Anne O'Hare McCormick, and she said, "In working out priorities, can you list them as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6?" I said, "No, that is exactly the point; there may be half a dozen different things, different articles, which would all be in the Priority 1 group; now if you list them -- say there are 6 of them -- as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, the general impression of the public is that No. 1 is more important than No. 6; so what you ought to do is to list all 6 under the figure 1. In other words, they may all be equally important."

I think that is something just for your own guidance; that should be explained in writing stories that there is no such thing as saying one particular article is Priority 1. There may be half a dozen that are Priority 1.

Q Has the lease-lend got to such a point, or have you discussed it, where we send them a thousand units of X and there is an understanding that we get back a thousand units of Y?

THE PRESIDENT: No. In other words, Pete (Mr. Brandt), let me -- I can tell you exactly what happened yesterday or day before, when I was talking about this thing. We may take time by the forelock, because we want to

be ready to shoot just as soon as we are given the green light by Congress. Let me put it this way:

We have, let us say, a column showing what we have on order at the present time for our own Army and Navy; it is very simple to work that up to a boiling-down program so as to get hundreds of pages of orders onto one sheet or one column, and that is divided up into deliveries -- expected deliveries; in other words, what they call a "flow sheet". Column 1 will be '41, column 2 will be '42 calendar year, for put-off deliveries, stuff we have already ordered.

Then comes another double column, What the British have already ordered, divided between 1941 and '42. That is very easy to get.

Then comes a third double column, What we are expecting to order; in other words, the stuff that will be all for our immediate Army and Navy out of the new bills that are up on the Hill today, or will be shortly -- deficiency bills, supplementary estimates, and the annual Army and Navy Appropriation Bills for the fiscal year 1942. You see there are three different kinds up there for us. That will be divided into those double columns of 1941 and 1942.

Then you get a fourth category, which is the list the British give us of things that they need which are not on order, and that is the column that the lend-lease bill is about. That will be divided between 1941 delivery and 1942 delivery. Then on the right-hand side of the page you have got a sum-total of all of these things which are on order or we expect or hope to place on order this spring.

Then of course you come to a question of working in -- dovetailing -- the priorities between all these different types of things -- four different types: On order by us and the British, and to be ordered by us

and the British. That is what they are working on so as to get an over-all picture of the whole scheme, looking as far ahead as we can.

Q Might there be transfers from one column to another?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, a small amount of transfers.

Q Haven't the British already started making their list in anticipation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, coming along very well.

Q Mr. President, where is the column showing the stuff we can spare?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

(The question was repeated.)

THE PRESIDENT: There is some transfer in this, a relatively small percentage; for instance, it is in the bill as it passed the House, from the money point of view -- what was it? -- a billion-three, out of former appropriations.

Q Mr. President, what is Mr. Harriman's relation to our Embassy over there? -- does he represent you directly?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, and I don't give a -- you know! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, how does he report?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know and I don't care.

Q Is it part of the Office of Production?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose he will report to the proper authorities.

Q That means you.

Q There is a report that Mr. Hopkins will be Administrator of the lend-lease program.

THE PRESIDENT: No, nothing in that.

Q Mr. President, did you have an opportunity to examine an open letter in the Cleveland Plain Dealer (February 15, 1941) about what men past draft age can do?

THE PRESIDENT: I did; and I thought it was a very interesting story. I have got it right here. It is by a former Marine who is past draft age. This is an open letter, of which the general tenor is -- well, there are three things in it, really. It starts off:

> "A good many times when we were lying around in the mud in 1918--"

meaning over in France

> "--we said, somewhat bitterly: 'When the next war comes along we'll go down to the corner and cheer. We'll take off our hats and salute the boys who are marching away. And then we'll dive into the nearest restaurant and order a big steak. With onions.'"

Then he goes on and he says (the President paraphrasing) the other night a lot of draftees were marching away, and they watched and they cheered and then they went into the nearest restaurant and ordered a big steak, with onions -- a fine steak, but it had no taste; so apparently, it won't work. When one's country is facing an uncertain future, one cannot fail to be concerned -- which brings us to the point.

"What we want to know,"--

he says,

"--is this: What is our part in the current job? What can we do?"

(The full text of the open letter will be found at the close of this report.)

In other words, there are the older fellows, who want to do something and do not quite know what they should do. And that is one of the things that we have been giving a lot of thought to. Quite a lot of people are working on the problem, men and women who want to do something back home, too old to go to the front, Army or Navy. What can they do? They want to do something.

Of course, really, there are two answers; and I suppose, to use a

very much overworked word, the word "priority" applies to people as well as it does to machines and tools, people who are doing any kind of useful work in their own community, performing service.

I got a letter the other day from a driver of a school bus up in Dutchess County, 52 years old, who wanted to do something. Well, he is taking kiddies to school every morning and taking them back every night. Somebody has to do it, and he is performing useful service at the present time, probably as useful as is possible for that fellow to do. He ought to be satisfied. He is really doing something.

And the fellow who is running an automobile garage does a lot -- another friend of mine up there. He wants to do something. He is performing a useful service to his community. He repairs automobiles and fills them with gas at the present time.

In both of those cases that is about as good a job as they can do. They are performing useful service; they are keeping the wheels going -- something which is a useful service. We haven't yet got to the point -- and I hope we never will -- where we have to take many men and many women off their normal work in the life of the community and put them onto something else. A good many of them in a perfectly natural way at the present time are moving over into the defense program itself, learning how to run a tool, doing something in a defense factory; but they may be doing an almost equally good job if they are making suits and dresses and baking bread -- just as useful a job as if they were turning out guns. And those people ought to feel that they really are doing something.

I take it this Marine has some regular, steady job that is a useful job in his community, and he is doing it today. Now, if time goes on, it may be necessary for us to -- how shall I put it? -- do a lot of

picking and choosing of some of these people, because they may be needed in other things connected with defense. We might have to increase the defense personnel; but as far as we can tell at the present time the increase in the total on immediate operations of defense is growing in a normal way.

At the same time in these communities there are a lot more things that can be done, and that is what we are studying. We are studying better health of the communities, better physical education of boys and girls and middle-aged people. You remember a few weeks ago I accused you all of being physically soft; you are still. We may put in some kind of Swedish exercises out on the front lawn in front of the Executive Offices, and I will lead you -- from a chair. (Laughter)

There are lots of things that can be done through local cooperation, and I think what we call the home defense thing is coming along pretty well. We will have some kind of a plan within a week or two -- I keep putting it off -- that will indicate from a central point what might be called ideal programs, leaving it to the communities -- in other words, decentralization -- as to how best to carry them out in communities and states. They are not ready for anything on it yet. I haven't got down to it yet, but I will pretty soon.

Q Mr. President, are there any parts of Mr. Hopkins' information that you could usefully discuss with us?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think anything more than what I have talked about.

Q He said, Mr. President, he had a definite mission; could you tell us what that mission was?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, there were about twenty different things; I have mentioned three or four of them already today.

Q Is there anything to be said, sir, about the destroyer matter?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word about it -- not a word. I haven't even read anything since last Friday, Fred (Mr. Essary). (Laughter)

Q You haven't read the papers?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't read the papers since last Friday.

Q Mr. President, Jesse Jones is quoted as saying before one of the House committees that we are in war, or nearly in war, and we are preparing for it; any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, anybody can debate on that; it means nothing -- a lot of words. I don't mean what Jesse said, but what anybody says; even if you write it, it's a lot of words -- don't mean a thing. That's an awful thing to say, isn't it? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, the destroyer program is running ahead of schedule; is there anything you can tell us on that, in general terms?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say, of course -- look, here's the thing: it's awfully hard to explain in a story, but you set out a goal for a year, or two years, ahead; what is it? It's an estimate; it may be a good estimate or it may be a bad estimate. In the case of plane production, about -- what? -- a month and a half ago, Mr. Knudsen said he was not satisfied, that he was 30 percent behind his guess that he had made. He couldn't tell you whether his guess was right, or whether it was too high or too low.

In the case of destroyers, the Navy Department made a guess as to how long it would take to turn them out; and that was back -- Oh, what? -- about the first of November. I read their guess and I said, "I know enough myself, just as a layman, to know that your guess is silly -- turning out destroyers in 24 to 30 months; in the World War I turned out destroyers in 10 months." So they revised their estimate; they have

nearly cut it in half. Now I don't know whether they are going to live up to that new estimate or not, but the construction of destroyers is speeding up very materially. As I said once before, I don't know whether it is going fast enough yet; if it goes fast and you are tickled to death, the next thing you do is to make it go still faster.

Q Mr. President, there is a vacancy on the District of Columbia courts -- one of your appointments; do you happen to know anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I have done nothing about it, not a thing.

Q Have you got a likely man in sight?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't anybody in sight. I had --

Q (interposing) Have you any plans for the week-end, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- an application I think from one gentleman, as long as we are going outside the District -- if we go outside the District -- from one gentleman who is a lawyer in one of the Hawaiian Islands, who thought it would be nice to come to Washington on that District job. (Laughter)

Q I should think it would!

Q Mr. President, anything on the St. Lawrence schedule?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing new.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Hoover and others are promoting a new plan for feeding the starving populations of Belgium and other conquered countries; do you think now there is anything this country could do toward helping those people?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say it is largely a question of fact, and let it go at that; that will make it difficult for you to write a story about it. (Laughter)

Q Would you say it is Germany's responsibility?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what it was; it is largely a question of fact. None of us know enough to give an answer -- not even you (Doris Fleeson) and John (Mr. O'Donnell)! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you have any travel plans for the week-end?

THE PRESIDENT: I may go to Hyde Park; if I can get off, I am going up Friday evening. The Library has a lot of stuff that needs going over.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

* * * * * *

"WHAT FOR US PAST DRAFT LIMIT, MR. PRESIDENT?

"By Roelif Loveland

"(An open letter to the president of the United States.)

"Dear Mr. President:

"A good many times when we were lying around in the mud in 1918 we said, somewhat bitterly: 'When the next war comes along we'll go down to the corner and cheer. We'll take off our hats and salute the boys who are marching away. And then we'll dive into the nearest restaurant and order a big steak. With onions.'

"Well, the other night a lot of draftees were marching away. We stood on the corner and cheered them. And then we dived into the nearest restaurant and ordered a big, thick steak. With onions. It was a fine steak -- but it had no taste.

"So, apparently, it won't work. When one's country is facing an uncertain future, one cannot fail to be concerned. Which brings us to the point.

"We are a lot of people, Mr. President -- we, who are too old to register for the draft.

"What we want to know is this: What is our part of the current job? What can we do?

"There are many people who know what their job is.

"Knudsen is too old for the draft, but his job is cut out for him.

"Stettinius knows what he has to do.

"Gen. Marshall knows what he has to do.

"Joe Smith, who operates a turret lathe, knows what he has to do.

"Bill Jones, the shipbuilder, knows what he has to do.

"But there are millions of us, Mr. President, who are not smart enough to do Knudsen's job, or capable enough to hold down Stettinius' job. We aren't military men like Gen. Marshall, and we don't know a continental thing about a turret lathe. We couldn't build a ship.

"Yet we love our country. We think it is the finest country in the world. When we see our boys away for military service we can't go in and eat a steak that tastes like ashes.

"We are groping around, Mr. President, hoping that we may learn what our job in the present emergency should be.

"Obviously we wouldn't make very good soldiers, for we huff and puff up the stairs, and we can't run very fast. But, given time, we can do a pretty fair job. We manage to hold down our peacetime jobs with a fair degree of skill, and we try to pay our debts.

"We realize, Mr. President, that whatever our part may be in the months to come, it won't be spectacular. We won't win any medals. We're not looking for any medals. But we would like to feel that in some small way we can contribute to the nation's effort to be strong -- so strong that alien theories and the denial of individual rights will crack up before our defense.

"A lot of people have been asking this question: 'What can I do?' They aren't very big people, and individually they couldn't do very much. Collectively they could do a lot.

"One man with whom we have talked has an idea that our job is to become perfectionists in the ordinary way of living. His notion is that if the health of the nation is a requisite to national defense, we should strive to become healthier; that if the ability to take orders is necessary, we should train ourselves to take orders instead of getting red-headed about it.

"This man has an idea that our job is to do better the things we have been doing in the past. If we have been making machinery in the past we should, he feels, continue to make machinery--only we should make it better.

"If we have been publishing newspapers in the past, we should continue to publish them, but we should work harder, and the result should be better. If our staffs become depleted (and the young men are leaving all the time for service with their regiments) we old veterans should tuck our long white beards under our topcoats and go back to chasing pictures without sounding off too much.

"It would seem that things like this are necessary -- that unswerving loyalty to our country can be manifested in the unheroic things that make up daily life.

"It would seem that a sweet degree of reasonableness which would prevent us from tossing brickbats at dachshunds because we dislike Hitler's political theories would be a part of it.

"We should like to know, Mr. President, what our place is in the national picture.

"Because, although we do not expect to carry the flag, we love it."

* * * * * *

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #720,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 21, 1941, 11.05 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe I have anything this morning; what have you got? (Pause) Nobody has anything at all?

Q Mr. President, General Fleming, in a speech at Bangor, Maine, recommended that extra legal arrangements which called for overtime pay on Saturdays and Sundays might be waived in order to avoid the week-end blackout.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about it; I haven't seen it.

Q Have you given any thought to Passamaquoddy as an American-Canadian naval base?

THE PRESIDENT: No, never heard about it until I read about it.

Q Mr. President, is there anything to say about the situation in the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't believe so.

Q Mr. President, there was a story from London yesterday that there was a plan on foot to continue the economic restrictions on Japan; any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard about it, Jay (Mr. Hayden); I hadn't even read it.

Q The State Department denied it.

THE PRESIDENT: And still they ask! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, General Marshall was quoted as having said that we were strengthening our armed forces in Hawaii and perhaps some of the islands we possess south of Hawaii; is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Who quoted him?

Q Various Members of Congress, I believe.

THE PRESIDENT: Who was supposed to have said this?

Q General Marshall.

THE PRESIDENT: In what kind of meeting?

Q In a secret meeting.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know why this should be anything more than background; I don't think it needs to be off the record. I read the papers this morning.

Now mind you, it is not for the people whether my left eyebrow is raised or whether my tone of voice is angry -- you better cut that out. I am not the least bit angry -- I am interested; I am really interested in a problem of ethics that I think the American people ought to be interested in. It does present a problem, and it is interesting, in times of world upheaval.

I will try to put this -- what shall I say? -- logically; there are certain things in regard to the defense of the United States that it is advisable, for the defense of the United States, should be kept confidential; and that is why, occasionally, before certain committees on the Hill, these matters -- which for national safety it is believed ought to be kept confidential -- are spoken of by the experts in those lines, are spoken of only in secret or executive sessions of a committee.

There is not very much new in this; I mean, it has been going, I think, since 1776. It still lives, this problem does; and this morning, when I started my breakfast, I read in all the papers, front-page stories about the Chief of Staff of the Army who was said to have given certain information to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs; and the stories then went on to say exactly what this Nation was supposed to have done.

Well, you raise two questions, both of which concern ethics, morals,

and patriotism in exactly the same way. The first question is, frankly, as to whether members of that committee, ethically, morally, or patriotically ought to disclose to anybody on the outside what was said. I am simply raising this as an interesting problem.

No. 2: If they do disclose what went on in the secret meeting, it is perfectly obvious that any reporter who is worth his salt will try to find out -- perfectly all right -- if the story is disclosed to him either by a member of the committee, either under seal of secrecy or without any seal of secrecy -- it is perfectly all right for the reporter to take that story to his office, because that is part of a reporter's business; and so I don't think there is any blame attaching to any reporter who carried those stories to his office; but the printing of the story or putting it on the wires by press associations or newspaper offices in Washington presents another very different, very difficult problem: Is or isn't the owner or the manager or the managing editor or the head of the Washington office under the same moral or ethical or patriotic duty not to print a story which has come out through a violation of confidence, out of a secret session of a Senate committee?

That is a nice question -- something that ought to be thought about; and, as I say, I don't attach any blame to any of the newspapermen who got these stories -- that is a part of your job, obviously -- but I do raise the question in regard to newspapers printing a story of that kind.

And, finally, just to close the thing up, I have got in my hand here from the Chief of Staff a story of what he said, that size (holding up a typewritten sheet). It is completely different from any of the stories which actually did appear, second- or third-hand, in any of the papers this morning.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, isn't there a difference between what might be published in peacetime and what might be published in wartime?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean?

Q High officials do give some testimony affecting the welfare of the American people; don't you think it is the function of the Press to keep the public informed?

THE PRESIDENT: Do you mean to say that it is the duty of the press to publish what are considered to be military secrets involving the safety of the country?

Q No, sir, I made that clear; I didn't include that.

THE PRESIDENT: I fail to see exactly what you are driving at.

Q Can you tell us, in the interests of accuracy, what the facts are?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly not! That would be what you might call compounding a felony.

Q Would you consider, sir, that the publication this morning has injured American defense in any way?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I do.

Q The reason I ask that is because you threw a doubt in my mind as to its accuracy.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not correct, in the first place, but a lot of people are going to think it is.

Q Sometimes an erroneous report will do more damage than a true one.

THE PRESIDENT: Exactly!

Q Therefore, I suggest that we have the truth! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a little too slick!

Q Mr. President, what <u>does</u> constitute a national defense secret?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think we have ever had any trouble about that

before. There has been mighty little that has been kept secret, and I don't think it has hurt anybody; and it is things that have been kept secret on the advice or recommendation of the people who are responsible -- primarily responsible -- for American defense, the Army and Navy.

Q Mr. President, must this remain background?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no, you can use it.

Q Mr. President, if we take the attitude that any testimony -- if the attitude is taken that any testimony given on the Hill in executive session remains secret, isn't the final test what the Government wants to give out and what it doesn't want to give out?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only if the Government didn't give out or held secret things that there was no reason for holding secret.

Q Then what is the test?

THE PRESIDENT: The test is what the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy thinks it would be harmful to the defense of this country to give out.

Q He is not required to give that to a Congressional committee which leaks.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Then that would be the safest way -- not to give it to a Congressional committee.

THE PRESIDENT: It might be the safest way; but of course, naturally, one doesn't like to withhold information from committees of Congress. The best way would be to have no disclosures by members of the committee and no disclosures by publishers.

Q If there is a conflict?

THE PRESIDENT: Then the second is essential.

Q The second is a reporter taking it to his office.

THE PRESIDENT: No, the printing of it, I am talking about.

Q You would not have the second if the first did not arise.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q In your criticism of the Press -

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am not criticizing the Press -- haven't been.

Q May we suggest that you include the radio also?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, quite right. It does raise an interesting question of ethics, morals, and patriotism.

Q My observation has been that anything that didn't leak out of a secret committee session up on the Hill, and wasn't published by the newspapermen, that about three days later some Congressman will bring it up on the floor, so it gets out anyway.

Q Or it might be made available at a Press Conference, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; after all, you are getting off into rather extraneous things. Suppose, for the sake of argument, there was something that ought not to be made public today; it might be perfectly all right to make it public a week hence. It's a question of <u>when</u>, and somebody has to have discussion on that.

Q The logical corollary of your argument seems to be that something ought to be done.

THE PRESIDENT: I am not suggesting any remedy, in any shape, manner, or form. I am raising the question as a problem which the American people ought to be interested in.

Q If you do not blame the reporter who gathers the story for the publisher, do you blame the radio reporter who gathers the story and puts it on the air himself?

THE PRESIDENT: If he puts it on the air himself, he is in the position of the man behind the desk.

Q If he can't use it, why should he get it in the first place? You blame the newspaper reporter for --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am not blaming the newspaper reporter.

Q Then you blame the radio reporter.

THE PRESIDENT: Is he a radio reporter or a radio announcer?

Q A commentator.

Q Mr. President, the Secretary of the Navy has issued to the radio outfit -- maybe to the newspapers -- exactly what he wishes they would not print, no matter where they get it -- certain ship movements and things of that sort; but that was a custom, I think, during the World War.

THE PRESIDENT: On the whole, things worked out very well.

Q If it is serious, it might be well to have somebody promote that sort of thing -- if it is worth while.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course there are two different crowds; there's the crowd that covers the Navy Department and the crowd that covers the --

Q (interposing) It would all go to the publishers, Mr. President.

Q Mr. President, you realize, of course, that we are up against a proposition; not being a Government-controlled press, we have to decide what really constitutes a dangerous secret.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think you do.

Q It may be we will if there is an attempt, under secrecy, to withhold information.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so: because the only things that ought not to be printed that come out of a secret session of a committee are determined by the defense people, not by you, not by me.

Q You would not object, then, sir, to printing what might come out of a secret session on a tax bill or something of that sort, rather than from national defense?

THE PRESIDENT: Now you are trying to draw a line between battleships and taxes.

Q Of course there is some relationship there (laughter); say a bill to establish a national park.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think they are ever talked about in secret session.

Q Don't you believe we have this problem, that one publisher may want to avoid using a certain story, but another will print it.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a terrible problem of the publisher; you and I know the case about the fellow who gets a story and he is not going to run it; but then he discovers that he has to run it in so-called self-protection.

Q Should that be taken up in the Publishers' Association?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In line with General Marshall's testimony, I wish to say this, that I called the Navy Press Bureau late yesterday. The way we got the report was that it would bolster the Pacific fleet. Officially, the Navy Press Bureau said, "We have no news," but unofficially, "Not for distribution". It was reported that army planes would be carried on aircraft carriers to Hawaii. They didn't know whether they would do it or not; if not, they would be carried by regular army transports. I was told that yesterday, with no strings on its publication from the Navy.

THE PRESIDENT: That I didn't know about.

Q Assuming that these reports endanger the country, do you think we ought to be thinking about the possibility of censorship, without a declaration of war?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course not; that is why I am putting it up to the people of the country.

Q You think it ought to be done voluntarily?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no question of censorship.

Q You want the papers to figure on some method of their own?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You have taken it up with the Press; do you intend to raise the problem before the Members of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Let's have a little discussion and see what the Congress does.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #721,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 25, 1941, 4.05 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Godwin says he is all in; go ahead.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Justice Murphy recommended a further study of civil service in connection with that special report filed yesterday; do you have any comment on his suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: No comment yet.

Q Do you expect to have the Executive Orders prepared which I assume are necessary to carry that out?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't talked to anybody about it.

Q Mr. President, have you received any report on the so-called "Battle of the B ottles in the Balkans"? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, only what I have read; it's a very sedate account -- an AP account, not a UP account. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there any possibility that Mr. Earle will be recalled as a result of this?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not that I know of.

Q Mr. President, there is a report from Buffalo that because the Lackawanna steel employees -- the steel employees at Lackawanna -- have voted for a strike, that you have been requested to act as arbiter.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is not true. I think some conciliator has gone up there; that is all I know about it.

Q Did you and Mr. Hillman talk that over?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I established from Steve (Mr. Early) that somebody else sent a conciliator up there.

Q Mr. President, in your talk with the Attorney General did you take up the Eighth Judicial Circuit vacancy?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we didn't.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your talk with Mr. Hillman today?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing of interest -- just general things.

Q The strike situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we didn't talk about that.

Q Mr. President, have you seen the statement by the Foreign Minister of Japan in which he said the white race should cede Oceania to the Asiatics?

THE PRESIDENT: I read that in the paper; I don't know as there is anything I can say about it, except that I am still not quite clear as to what Oceania means.

Q Mr. President, in tracing some of the men connected with the OPM, I find they are with the British Purchasing Commission, some of them with salaries as high as $2,000. a month.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a brand new one on me. I think you might tell that to the committee in Congress that is looking into those things.

Q Mr. President, the OPM yesterday imposed priorities on aluminum, which may mean there will be less aluminum for pots and pans in the future; I wonder if you expect more similar sacrifices in the future?

THE PRESIDENT: Sacrifices?

Q Well, priorities that will mean sacrifices for consumers.

THE PRESIDENT: Are you worrying about your breakfast?

Q What?

THE PRESIDENT: Are you worrying about your breakfast?

Q No, but I was wondering about how far this may go in the future.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, will the priorities necessarily mean sacrifices?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; it depends a little bit on the definition of the word sacrifices.

Q I mean so it could be felt -- whether you could or could not buy a car or an aluminum pan?

THE PRESIDENT: Are you particular what utensil your eggs are cooked in in the morning? That would be terrible, wouldn't it? It depends entirely on the definition of the word sacrifice.

Q A curtailment of something good.

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily a curtailment -- that's exactly what I was talking about; you don't care particularly what kind of pan your eggs are boiled in, do you?

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: It might mean that you would have to take them boiled in some kind of a pan other than aluminum; that doesn't mean you go without eggs.

Q Does that apply to automobiles?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Does that apply to automobiles?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I read in the paper they were going to have the same engine under the hood but change the outline a little.

Q Did you discuss the Ellender amendment this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: We discussed a lot of amendments.

Q What is your opinion on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can talk about any of those amendments at the present time. I don't think it is a good thing to discuss those amendments. It is obvious that we don't want the kind of amendments that

would change the policy of the Government or the request of the Government for authority to give all possible aid to the British short of war.

Q They were saying up on the Hill that if, as you have repeatedly said, you have no plans to send American troops abroad, there was no reason why you could not approve this amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing I can do is to talk to you off the record. That is not a mandatory amendment, as you know.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I have to make this entirely off the record, because it is largely a question of -- what shall I say? -- a question of geography. What would happen, for example, if -- I can't even name names -- if in a certain area in the Pacific Ocean there were an unoccupied island that nobody was on and the title to it -- the sovereignty -- had never been clearly established; and some other nation would come in there and suddenly turn it into a submarine base, and it were right close to an American, a U.S., possession? Now, I just raise that question.

Q Mr. President, on the record, is there any way, for practical purposes, that you could define the Western Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: Define the Western Hemisphere?

Q Yes; there have been all kinds of discussions in Congress. Some have defined Siberia as being part of the Western Hemisphere.

THE PRESIDENT: Not on the record; it is too difficult on the record. I can do it off the record, but it would have to be <u>really</u> off the record, just for your information as to what the normal, logical way of applying the rule would be. It would be a line drawn in the Atlantic about halfway between the most westerly part of the western continent -- North, Central, and South America -- which is the sticky-out point of

Brazil, and the same relative point on the other side, which happens to be the sticky-out point of Africa. Well, a line halfway between the two, drawn due north and due south, would about define it.

And in the Pacific, except for a funny little jog at the top, if you will look the thing up on the map, it is, roughly, the international date line. That has always been considered the halfway point.

Q Mr. President, that then places Greenland in the Western Hemisphere; is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Part of Iceland, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think it misses Iceland by 40 or 60 miles; and misses the Azores about 120 miles.

Q Does that put part of Alaska in the Eastern Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q New Zealand?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know where New Zealand lies in relation to the international date line.

Q A little tip of Siberia in the Western Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q We couldn't use that, even without attribution?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

(The question was repeated.)

THE PRESIDENT: If you put it on what might be called a normal, common-sense definition.

Q Mr. President, have you read a somewhat similar description made by Stefansson, the Arctic explorer?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q Stefansson.

THE PRESIDENT: No, I hadn't read that. My authority, really, was Dr. Bowman, President of Johns Hopkins University, who used to be the head of the American Geographical Society, which is the real scientific geographical society in this country.

MR. EARLY: Still off the record, or on?

THE PRESIDENT: That is off the record, because the thing it applies to is off the record.

Q Mr. President, is this all off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; all you have to do is take a map yourself; you can run it as easy as I can run it.

Q No objection to use of that information if it is not attributed to you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that's all right.

Q May it not be necessary for Congress to define the Western Hemisphere for this bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; it's a legislative problem, not an executive problem.

Q Mr. President, is Mr. Winant taking any ideas to London as to what sort of peace to negotiate after the war is over?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say the first thing to do is to win the war, wouldn't you?

Q Mr. President, in connection with the ceding of territory in Oceania, is there any thought of ceding any islands to Japan that are in the East Indies?

THE PRESIDENT: No, never heard of it.

Q Mr. President, have there been any discussions relative to the need of increasing the importation of raw rubber from the East Indies?

THE PRESIDENT: You better take up the actual figures with either Mr. Jones or Mr. Stettinius. We have been getting a lot of raw rubber, and we have quite a good sized stock pile on hand.

Q Mr. Stettinius estimates the supply will last 16 months, Jones 2 years, and the Goodyear people, 6 months.

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't you get them in a room together? (Laughter) We think the situation is pretty well in hand at the moment. We are adding to the stock pile, and we think that with the present stock pile and with, if necessary, a pick-up campaign -- we have used this before, and it's all old stuff -- a pick-up campaign to find all the old spare tires in the back yards and barns, that we would have enough rubber to keep us going until we could put into production a sufficient number of synthetic rubber plants.

Q Isn't tin a more serious problem, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably not, no.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #722,
Executive Offices of the White House,
February 28, 1941, 10.55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Earl (Mr. Godwin), do you think you can talk about this(the President pointed to the steel industry report from Mr. Dunn) intelligently over the air?

MR. GODWIN: No, sir; but I suppose I could make it intelligent and talk it! Is that the big report?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Is it easy to cut down to words of one syllable?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to try to this morning.

MR. GODWIN: You know people can only understand a few words when they hear it. This is big stuff.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing of any real importance that I have is the report on steel production by Mr. Gano Dunn, and it is about 60 or 70 pages long. The report as a whole will be available over there in the office of -- what?

MR. EARLY: Tom Wilson.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got here for you right after the conference a 2 3/4-page summary of it, which is an awfully difficult thing to put into a story, I admit. Mr. Godwin and I realize the impossibility of that for the average reader; so Earl (Mr. Godwin) and I are going to try to put it into words of one syllable for you. In other words, I am going to try to summarize this 3-page summary for you.

The thing that people want to know most all over the country is whether we have enough steel production to take care of our defense pro-

gram, including munitions for those nations which are trying to uphold democracy in the world -- been a lot of very loose talk -- it's a terribly complicated subject -- and the answer is, Yes, we have enough, which is exceedingly encouraging. That provides leeways of additional production which we believe will be adequate for all purposes.

There are, of course, a number of things which are of minor character in the figures of total need which might or might not have to be done; but they are so minor that they ought to be labeled as such -- the total is all right -- we'll come to them in a minute.

On the first thing, Mr. Dunn took, as the basis of this, certain estimates of probable requirements. The particular estimates that he took were made by Professor Melvin de Chazeau -- that is in this thing here -- I think of the University of Virginia but now employed as economist by the Government. Those are estimates of requirements for steel for civilian uses during 1941 and '42.

Now, of course one basis for estimates of the needs for steel is the national income, because, obviously, the higher the national income the more the demands for steel; and there are, therefore, at the end of this original report, two appendix graphs; the first one is based on an estimated national income in 1941 of 80 billion dollars, showing that there would be, under those conditions, an estimated surplus capacity in steel of 10 million tons.

Q Mr. President, I don't understand what you mean by "estimated surplus capacity".

THE PRESIDENT: I mean, more than all other things added together that we think would be ordered.

Q Both military and civilian?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the whole works.

Q We have 10 million more than we need?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that is on an estimated national income of 80 billion dollars in 1941; then on the same sheet, '42, a 90-billion income. And even with that, by that time, he figures that we would have a possible surplus -- extra capacity -- to meet further needs of 2 billion tons, and --

Q (interposing) Two million tons?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You say "possible surplus".

THE PRESIDENT: Available.

Q Is that on present production capacity, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Estimating expansion which is already under way.

Q Are you referring to a calendar year, or a fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: This refers, I think, to a fiscal year of 77 billion national income instead of 80 -- a lower national income and therefore a potentially greater surplus, 14 million tons.

Q What year is that?

THE PRESIDENT: '41 -- this fiscal year that we are in. Then for the following year, estimating 87 billion national income instead of 90, that would give an estimated potential surplus of 6 million tons.

Q That is '43?

THE PRESIDENT: '42.

Q I thought you had '42 for 90 billion?

THE PRESIDENT: The second sheet, instead of giving 80 and 90, gives you 77 and 87; in other words, a smaller -- lower -- national income, and therefore a greater potential surplus in both cases.

Now, there are certain things which -- I come back to the things that might have to be done. (Here the President studied the report a few moments.) You know that in making steel you put in two cheap tonnages; one is ingots and the other is scrap. If you are a little short at any time of pig -- that is ingots -- you increase the ratio of scrap to the pig. That is not impossible at all.

No. 2. On the question of coke: there might be a slight -- a very small shortage of coke. Mr. Dunn says that by diverting a small amount of coke for use in the home and commercial heating units to the steel industry you would get enough coke.

Mr. Dunn thinks that the total reliable capacity for ingots at the beginning of this calendar year is 87½ million tons, which is 3½ million tons more than had been previously supposed.

Q That is as of January 1, 1941, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The statistics given in Mr. Dunn's study, and conclusions drawn from them, present an encouraging picture of the Nation's defense program, to good neighbor nations and to users of steel and steel products for civilian consumption.

This report of his -- I have asked Mr. Dunn to keep it up to date; but it probably is the best thing that has been done yet -- excuse the pun -- and is something that, until somebody proves the contrary, we can rely on as what might be called the standard.

Q Mr. President, what is the relation between the figures you have and the information you are giving us and the defense needs of the defense picture?

THE PRESIDENT: Plenty -- all included. That is over-all. That is the steel for export, steel for defense articles here, like guns and so forth, and steel for civilian use.

Q Mr. President, are those graph figures in there?

THE PRESIDENT: They are not in Steve's (Mr. Early's) report. Steve, you could show anybody that is interested the last two pages of this. (The President indicated the full report.)

MR. EARLY: Mr. Wilson will have a half dozen or more copies of this (indicating the full report). This report is not printed; there are not copies available for the Press. They will be available at his office.

THE PRESIDENT: You might show it to anybody that wants to see it. It's snowing outside and we don't want them to get their feet wet.

Q That's right -- make the press agent work!

Q Mr. President, what is the effect of the Dunn report on the steel production plan submitted by Mr. Philip Murray? You recall the Murray proposal for steel production?

THE PRESIDENT: Airplanes?

Q No, Philip Murray's plans for increased steel production -- not the Reuther plan -- the Murray plan for steel production.

THE PRESIDENT: This all works in. That is a management plan that all works into it. This is based on full supply in all the factories.

Q Mr. President, in view of this report, will there be any necessity for steel priorities?

THE PRESIDENT: At the present time I should say no; and that is one thing that I suppose ought to be printed. Now, just for example, there was a fellow that came in the other day; he was a builder, building contractor; he wanted to put up a lot of little -- small in size -- I think it was an individual steel-frame house with four rooms; and he put up -- I don't know -- four or five of them as samples, and they rented like hot cakes. Everybody liked the type of house -- a very cheap house to put up --

$1800 or $2000 complete, to build one of these houses. He came in and complained that the steel company that he bought his original steel from said, Oh, no, they couldn't supply the steel because the Government wouldn't let them. Well, of course that was a deliberate lie, that the Government wouldn't let them. There's plenty of steel for the people who want to build small houses. It was just a camouflage; it was an excuse for not filling this particular order, either because they thought there was something more profitable -- other types of steel that they could use -- or the small amount for a hundred little frames was so small they didn't want to bother with it. So, if anybody says that they can't get orders for civilian uses of steel -- if anybody says that, tell them to come right to somebody down here and we will look right into it, because there's plenty of steel capacity.

Q Is it proper to say, from this report, the Nation can get plenty of steel for domestic and defense uses?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, for ourselves and other nations; and we can even increase the present program and get it out.

Q Mr. President, there's a request for a 25-percent increase in wages at Lackawanna, and it has been reported that you told the steel management people you didn't want any large increases in wages because that would throw prices out of line; is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no.

Q Mr. President, are you through with this other phase?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir!

Q I was wondering, in view of the fact that Miss Perkins said yesterday, prior to the submission of this plan for settling the Bethlehem strike, that she and the OPM were figuring on a mediation plan that would be ready in two weeks.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, Jim (Mr. Wright), because there are all kinds of things we may come to. They are all in the study stage. There is absolutely nothing done at all. If you will remember, in the first World War, as time went on -- even before we got into the war -- there were various sets of machinery that were set up. Now, of course those things are all under study, but I don't think there's any story in it yet. Whether something will be set up, and what it will be, I don't know; and I suppose I would be the only person that could know. And you don't know, either -- excuse my saying that.

Q No, but in brief general terms you could indicate what is intended.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose there are a half dozen different suggestions that have been made.

Q Mr. President, are you concerned with this labor defense picture?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the proposals made up in Congress for investigation of the defense program?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely within their right; good thing to keep checking on things as they come along instead of waiting until after it is all over.

Q Mr. President, are you going to send the report on defense highways to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: On what?

Q The report you got on defense highways from Mr. Carmody.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so yet. I think I sent it over to the National Resources for comment. I think it is there now.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

VOICES: Mr. President! Mr. President!

Q It is reported that Harry Hopkins is going to be the coordinator of de-

fenses abroad; do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; it's a new one on me.

Q Mr. President, there have been reports that Mr. Bullitt will head the home defense set-up?

THE PRESIDENT: A new one on me.

Q Would you care to comment on King Alfonso of Spain? He died this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so -- I mean I don't think I want to comment -- I'm not doubting your word that he died. (Laughter)

Q May I ask you one more question: Did that question of the settlement of the Bethlehem strike come to your personal attention at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I kept informed of most of those things most of the day and most of the night, even when I had a bad cold.

Q Did they send you a report on the Detroit strike situation?

THE PRESIDENT: (looking at Mr. Early) Steve says I haven't seen it.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

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Q Thank you, Mr. President!

Summary of a 60 or 70 page report.

FOR THE PRESS IMMEDIATE RELEASE FEBRUARY 28, 1941

STEEL INDUSTRY REPORT BY GANO DUNN

At the request of the President, Mr. Gano Dunn has made an exhaustive survey of the capacity of the steel industry to determine whether it has adequate facilities to meet the combined requirements of the United States and British defense programs and expanded demands for civilian uses. Mr. Dunn is senior consultant to the Production Division of the Office of Production Management, but in this instance made his report direct to the President.

The study was requested by the President because of conflicting estimates of steel requirements during the next two years and of the consequent ability of the industry to meet all demands placed upon it. This question is of such importance to the defense program and the national economy as a whole that the President requested Mr. Dunn, as a qualified authority capable of presenting an impartial, factual study, to make a special report on the subject.

The investigation on which it was based was carried out over a period of six weeks. During the course of his inquiry Mr. Dunn consulted with a great many economists and experts, both in government and industry, and representatives of organized labor in the steel industry. He has acknowledged the valuable assistance of many of these persons.

Mr. Dunn has accepted the estimates of Melvin de Chazeau, economist attached to the Materials Branch, Office of Production Management, on probable requirements of steel for civilian uses during 1941 and 1942. These estimates are based on the assumption of a national income of 80 billion dollars in 1941, 90 billion in 1942, and a greatly increased demand for steel for civilian uses as a result of the rise in national income.

However, the Dunn report includes information on actual capacity for production of steel ingots which has never been known before and which demonstrates that that capacity is considerably higher than was generally realized.

The report concludes that if certain measures are undertaken there will be an excess of ingot-producing capacity over total requirements of 10,100,000 tons during the present year and 2,100,000 in 1942. These measures that must be taken to attain capacity production include the elimination of potential bottlenecks in output of pig iron and coke, an even distribution of orders throughout the industry, and a shortening of the period of time during which steel-making facilities are normally closed down for repair work.

Mr. Dunn has arrived at a new measure of steel capacity which he has called "reliable capacity." The difference between "reliable capacity" and "reported capacity" is that "reliable capacity" takes into account certain existing facilities for the production of steel castings which are not included in reported statistics of the industry and that the period of time normally consumed for repairing facilities can be reduced at a nominal increase in cost to the steel companies. This increased expenditure in the interests of time-saving is justified by the emergency nature of demands on the industry.

The report estimated that, on the basis of existing facilities at the beginning of the year, a shortage of 1,130,314 tons, or 2.3%, in capacity for production of pig iron would result if the industry were to operate at reliable capacity throughout the year. In 1942 a potential shortage in the production of pig iron of 544,481 tons is anticipated on the basis of existing facilities if the industry were to operate at capacity during that year.

Coke shortage during 1941, on the same basis, is estimated at 5,360,315 tons, or 12%, and during 1942 at 2,670,906 tons. Total cost of removing these deficits by construction of additional facilities would be $59,545,975 in 1941 and $29,482,964 in 1942. Some of these facilities are already under construction.

Mr. Dunn has recommended that this increase in facilities be undertaken and that if it does not occur normally that it be pro-rated over the industry by the Director General of the Office of Production Management. His recommendation along these lines is based on the conviction that the normal relationship between pig iron and scrap going into ingot steel should be maintained and that adequate supplies of coke should be available both for steel making and for home and commercial heating purposes. Pending the installation of new facilities, however, any shortages that might arise from these directions could be met (1) by increasing the ratio of scrap to pig iron going into ingots and (2) by diverting coke from use in home and commercial heating units to the steel industry. If such expedients are found necessary it is agreed that they should be made temporary by the creation of new pig and coke facilities to maintain normal balance and practices in the industry and to minimize any disturbance of civilian consumption of coke.

The Dunn report strongly emphasizes the necessity of even distribution of orders throughout the industry if maximum overall production is to be reached and maintained. In other words, one producer must not be allowed to acquire a large backlog of orders for delivery well into the future while another producer is operating at less-than-maximum capacity. This might involve a considerable shifting of orders and require users of steel to deal with different sources of supply than they have in the past. Mr. Dunn recommended that unless such distribution takes place by voluntary action of the industry that the Director of the Division of Priorities assume responsibility for the task.

Reliable capacity for steel ingots at the beginning of this year, with ample allowances for periodic shut-down for repairs, is reported in the Dunn study as 87,576,099 tons per year. This is roughly 3,500,000 tons higher than previously supposed. Completion of additional facilities, now under way, will raise reliable annual capacity to 91,124,718 tons by the end of the year. It should be clearly understood that these figures on capacity represent the maximum rate of operations that could be continued over an extended period of time. Mr. Dunn has concluded that the industry could, under proper conditions, operate indefinitely at a rate of slightly more than 102% of reported capacity, which heretofore has been the normal measure of steel capacity.

Ingot production in January was at the highest point in the history of the country, amounting to 6,943,084 tons. However, the Dunn report makes the interesting observation that while this figure represents 97.1% of "reported capacity" it is only 94.5% of "reliable capacity". When compared with reliable capacity that will exist at the end of this year, January production would represent only 91% of that capacity.

Direct defense requirements for steel in 1941 are estimated in the Dunn report at 3,100,000 tons. There is not much controversy over this figure. Exports of steel, mostly to England and Canada, are placed at 13,400,000 tons. Civilian requirements, based on a national income of eighty billion dollars, are estimated at 61,000,000 tons, making a total of 77,500,000 tons or 10,100,000 less than the reliable capacity of the industry to produce ingots. Naturally, if the national income is less than eighty billion dollars, civilian requirements will be less and the safety margin correspondingly increased. For instance, if the national income in 1941 reaches only seventy-seven billion dollars, surplus capacity is estimated at 14,100,000 tons.

Surplus capacity in 1942, based on a national income of ninety billion dollars, is estimated at 2,100,000 tons. Again, if the national income in 1942 reaches but 87 billion dollars, surplus capacity would be 6,100,000 tons.

While exact figures in every category cannot be collected, the Dunn report finds that capacity for rolled and other steel products is generally well in excess of ingot capacity, ranging from 50% in certain sectors to an average of 15%. The conclusion is that if orders are properly distributed, total requirements for fabricated products can be met without unusual delay. This should not be taken to mean that at no time during the course of the defense program will any user of any steel product face difficulty in obtaining prompt deliveries. During a period of tremendous industrial expansion, with requirements for specific products undergoing frequent changes, the development of temporary choke points in certain spots from time to time appears to be inevitable.

However, the statistics unearthed by Mr. Dunn's study and the conclusions drawn from them, present an encouraging picture to the directors of this nation's defense program, to good neighbor nations, and to users of steel and steel products for civilian consumption.

In view of the importance of steel capacity and the necessity of having an up-to-date picture of the situation, the President has asked Mr. Dunn to make this survey and report the starting point of a continuing study. Mr. Dunn has accepted this assignment and will revise his statistics and conclusions periodically, reporting directly to the President on his findings.

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CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #723,
Executive Offices of the White House,
March 4, 1941, 4.08 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I have been incommunicado -- or perhaps some people would say excommunicado -- for so long I don't know what has happened; maybe you can give me the news.

Q Mr. President, the afternoon papers say John Cudahy is going to Germany to see Hitler; do you know anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a thing.

Q Mr. Cudahy no longer has an official connection with the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; he's a newspaperman.

Q Mr. President, another report in circulation is that Ambassador Bullitt is to have an appointment somewhere shortly in the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't talked to anybody since yesterday morning; I told them to cancel everything.

Q I didn't mean an appointment with you but a post in the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Do you think there is a filibuster going on, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I suppose that's open to argument, isn't it?

Q (Mr. Godwin) Would you like to argue it, sir? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. The trouble is, Earl, probably you and I would take the same side!

Q There are proposals for amendments; are you in a position -- do you want to speak about any of those amendments?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, did you see the Russian note to Bulgaria?

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't had any report on the actual notes; I only saw the account in the paper.

Q Mr. Early this morning told us something of how the Lend-Lease Bill would be administered; would you care to expand --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Did he say that? I thought he said how it would not be administered. There's all the difference in the world between those two questions. Am I right, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Right!

Q Mr. President, will the Cabinet advise you on allocation of property to go over?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, look: Here's probably the simplest way to put it; I couldn't write a story on anything new, because there isn't anything new. When it comes to making up three things, one is called a budget, one is called a deficiency, and another is called a supplementary estimate. The making up of those estimates goes through a great many different hands; and under the law I have to send the estimate up -- been doing it now for eight years today; and the same process continues as obtained on the fourth of March, 1933, except that Congress didn't meet until four or five days later. There is absolutely no change in the making up of that. I consult all kinds of people, because the ultimate signature has to be mine. That is about all there is in the way of a story, and that is not a headline.

Q Mr. President, has the date been set for Ambassador Biddle's departure for London?

THE PRESIDENT: He is coming in this afternoon, in about fifteen minutes, with his wife, to say good-bye. I don't know when he is to leave.

Q Mr. President, would you care to give us a reminiscent thought on eight

years ago today? You referred to the thought that eight years have passed.

THE PRESIDENT: You could say that I, personally, do not feel any different than I have at any time during the eight years. We have a different kind of crisis, a world crisis instead of a domestic crisis, eight years later. In some ways, on a comparable basis for the future of the country, it is probably more serious than the one eight years ago. I think we might let it go at that.

Q Mr. President, do you see any cause for concern in the labor situation as affecting the defense projects?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course that is a question that would take half an hour to answer -- the kind of question that can't be answered. It's a little like saying, Have you stopped beating your wife? -- yes or no? It's an impossible question to answer as is. Perhaps I can illustrate by telling you this: I got a letter -- oh, yesterday or the day before -- from a very worthy citizen in Florida who was frightfully upset because of what he had read. Where he had read it, I am not saying; but anyway it was because of what he had read. And he said, in effect, this: "We are all horrified by the complete breakdown of defense production because of strikes." In other words, he got it into his head that there was a breakdown in production because of strikes. Now, of course there are a certain number of strikes; and I would hate to give you this as the definitive figure, but I think it is approximately correct that about a quarter of one percent of production has been affected by strikes at any given time. A quarter of one percent is what? -- one four-hundredth; so you see the gentleman had got an erroneous impression from what he had read, according to his own statement. That's worth thinking about. In other words, somebody had written something -- I am not saying where -- that had caused

a perfectly worthy citizen to get a false impression, and that is a great pity for our defense effort.

Q Mr. President, has your study gone long enough so you could say anything about the cooling-off period before strikes? Mr. Knudsen indicated you were developing plans.

THE PRESIDENT: That's part of the whole thing.

Q Would you favor that being done?

THE PRESIDENT: It's like a pending amendment to a bill on the floor -- any old kind of a bill; it's just part of a general thing.

Q You mean that will be a part of it?

THE PRESIDENT: A part of the study.

Q Under Secretary Patterson suggested you might revive the old War Labor Board without any legislation being required.

THE PRESIDENT: Everything on labor has been under consideration -- has been constantly; there isn't any news in it.

Q Mr. President, is there any news in the Danish situation, which is also under study?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is still under study; a very difficult one.

Q Mr. President, do you think it is justified for the labor unions to charge fees on construction projects on all men, whether or not they are members of unions, for a job?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't talk to a general question; give me some specific instances, cases, places; then I will look it up and find out whether the facts are in accordance with the statements; then I will give you an answer after that.

Q Do you want this in a memo? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, I can't talk glittering generalities.

Q You have heard of the situation, have you not?

THE PRESIDENT: I have heard of one or two specific cases where the fees charged for joining a union were exorbitant; and those cases were taken up by the Federation of Labor for the international concern, and they reported that the practice has been stopped. You have to be specific; I'll be specific if you are.

Q All I can do is to refer to testimony before the House Judiciary Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: That has all been referred to the Department of Justice and the Federation of Labor; I think they were all A.F.L. cases.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to go to the Department of Justice or the A.F.L. to find out what happened in each case.

Q That included fees for men who were not members of the union but who paid a cut from their daily wage.

THE PRESIDENT: That was referred to them -- a specific case.

Q Mr. President, a few weeks ago you mentioned the fact that there were several, or a few, isolated instances in which the question of taking over plants with which it was impossible to make agreements had been considered; what is the status of that situation at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you, because all I know is the plants were not taken over and I haven't had any further report. Whether it is still under study I couldn't tell you.

Q Have there been any additional plants, sir, since that time reported to you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think not; there may have been additional plants, but they have not been reported to me.

Q Mr. President, late last evening there was an Executive Order prepared which would freeze the funds in this country of all foreign belligerents;

would you care to say why it wasn't signed?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q There was an Executive Order; it wasn't signed; I wonder if you care to say why.

THE PRESIDENT: I never saw it. I suppose there have been half a dozen different forms drawn in the last year and a half. There has been nothing presented to me for signature.

Q Do you have any new orders pending?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I'm sorry to spoil that one, too; I'm a regular spoil-sport today. (Laughter)

Q What about that plan the Marine wrote in about for old soldiers and the rest of the wrecks to do something?

THE PRESIDENT: That home defense thing?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That's one of the most difficult things to put together in administrative form that I have had yet, because it covers so many different things in life. It's sort of a general endeavor on the part of men, women, and children in every State in the Union, and it is very hard to set up the right kind of administrative machinery that at the same time will allow it to be decentralized and run primarily by the various communities themselves. Frankly, I have been at it now for about a month, you know -- over a month -- and I haven't yet decided on what kind of final machinery to set up. I am still having conferences on it. It's one of those real troubles.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #724,
Executive Offices of the White House,
March 7, 1941, 10.55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well?

Q (Mr. Godwin) Well, how are you?

THE PRESIDENT: As far as I am concerned, you might as well put the lid on now as twenty minutes later.

Q Thank you, Mr. President! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Right on time! (Here the President set a clock out in front of him showing the time as 10.30.) Steve (Mr. Early) brought that in a little while ago.

Q What time is that, Mr. President?

Q Is that Mountain time? (Laughter)

Q Daylight saving? (More laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's Early time! It's Early time!

Q Who thought that up?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean -- who thought that up?

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got a thing.

Q Would it be all the same, Mr. President, if we change the hour of these Friday conference to 10.30? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I tried to do this morning! I thought we would have these conferences at 10.30.

Q Would you vote for 11 o'clock? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think 10.30 is all right.

Q Of course I knew the Legislative could turn the clock back, but I didn't know the Executive could.

THE PRESIDENT: This (pointing to the clock again) is what is called Early time -- Stephen T. Early time! (Laughter)

I suggested that we put the lid on at the beginning of the conference; might just as well -- I got nothing over the week end except work; and that's all there is.

Q Mr. President, in the last Conference you said that strikes in defense industries had only affected one quarter of one percent of production at any given time; on what basis was that estimate made?

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that Miss Perkins talked to the editor of the New York Times on it and explained the editorial to him and told him that if he had read the columns of the New York Times he would have found authority for my statement. That's just between us girls (laughter) -- very funny! As a matter of fact, it was a release down here by the -- what was it? the Labor Department itself or Lubin's organization? -- one of those organizations. I got my information from the papers; and the New York Times yesterday morning wanted to know the source of it in the editorial; so we told them it was the columns of the Times. (Laughter)

Q The difference is "at any given time" or as Madam Perkins puts it, "over a period of a year"; that seems to be the difference.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will find it is true at any given time. I think it would be awfully hard to find any given time when there was more than that percentage out. That doesn't mean it will be so in the future. People forget how many multitudinous lines there are to this defense program. If you think just in terms of airplane production alone, or the percentage in some given product, it might be higher; but talking about defense as a whole, it is true.

Q Mr. President, I wonder, though, whether that was the correct yardstick

for measuring the effect on defense industry; for example, out at Allis-Chalmers they are making machinery for powder manufacture; that is one of our bottlenecks; is it fair to use it on that basis?

THE PRESIDENT: No; but then on the other hand it is equally true that, on a percentage basis, making tools for powder is still part of the whole defense industry. In other words, if you are going to be specific, you have to carry out your being specific all the way through in the story in order to be fair. You can't generalize on the defense program by taking one particular bottleneck.

I'll give you another bottleneck; take steel; the steel industry, as a whole, according to that report of Gano Dunn, is pretty good. As I said the other day, there may be certain bottlenecks in special varieties of steel; that doesn't mean the steel industry as a whole. There may be a bottleneck on chromium; but the percentage of chromium steel to the total of steel is a very, very low percentage; and it is sometimes, with certain articles, possible to substitute some other type of steel for chromium steel. You have to be an expert before you can write a story -- much more expert than I ever thought of being.

Q Mr. President, don't you think, on the whole, it would be desirable to do away with some of the jurisdictional strikes?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely! I don't think the country, as a whole, can approve of a strike like the one out at Wright Field, just as an example -- that particular case.

Q Sir, were you aware of what the Army intended to do at Wright Field before they took that action?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q They did that on their own?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, are the jurisdictional strikes a part of your general study of strikes?

Q You have a Supreme Court decision that says you can't interfere.

THE PRESIDENT: No, but that is too much generalization; you give the Supreme Court, the Circuit Court of Appeals, or the District Court a given case which they will decide; and there will be a number 2 case which comes along a little later which to the layman looks just like the number 1 case, and yet when you get it up to the same court, they will differentiate between them. There may be a lot of factors that you and I, as laymen, do not understand there is a difference in.

As a matter of fact, on this general thing, I talked to you the other day about studying it. It does look as if, in time, we will have some kind of top board in Washington which will be not merely a mediation board but will look at the whole angle of problems of labor and production, not merely from the individual case but from the longer range policy view, looking even to the problem of distribution of plant facilities and labor -- too great labor concentration in any one given place after the emergency is all over. In other words, we are thinking ahead on the specific individual case of today and trying to make the settlement of it fit into a general pattern of the future.

Now, there may be some central organization; I am not saying there will not. It is still being studied, and there are various plans. We may set up some central organization of that kind; but you can't say it would be merely reconstituting what we called the old Taft-Walsh Board of the World War; it might have a broader field than that Taft-Walsh Board had.

Q Would that board be subordinating Mr. Knudsen's O.P.M., Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no, that would be a separate thing.

Q Mr. President, it would deal with current labor problems as they come up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, what might be called a final place to which things would come; but like the Taft-Walsh Board, it wouldn't handle the smaller problems. They would be handled locally, or through the conciliation agencies or through their own top people -- like this thing out at Wright Field; they probably wouldn't handle that.

Q Have you considered this cooling-off period yet, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: That's just a small detail out of a thousand.

Q Mr. President, did Mr. Philip Murray communicate to you his opposition to the general idea?

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not!

I would say this thing is going along pretty well. You can't put it down in black and white, and you will have a great many other ramifications. I don't know how you can write a story on it without being didactic, and therefore wrong; every time you get didactic, you are wrong, you know. I don't know how you can write a story if you go into details and say it is probable such and such a thing will happen; nobody knows half of the thousands of ramifications of this sort of thing down the line that you never think of unless you study it. You have got regional problems; you have got industrial problems within one given industry; you have cost-of-living problems; you have got congestion problems, and so forth and so on. So leave it as it is today, a very general glittering generality. That's as far as you can go and tell the truth.

Q Mr. President, do you know whether any steps are being taken to relieve

nickel for civilian uses?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I do know that there is not enough nickel coming in now for Army and Navy purposes; it is one of the shortages.

Q There is not enough for Army and Navy purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I mean including civilian uses.

Q Mr. President, Under Secretary Patterson made the point the other day that the Taft-Walsh thing was done without legislation; is this tentative idea that you have of a similar nature?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You would not have to have any legislation in order to set it up?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q How are you going to handle jurisdictional strikes?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; that's one of the difficulties at the present time.

Q Mr. President, did Mr. Murray talk over with you the possibility of an over-all strike in the steel industry?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Hillman gave the impression, I think, in his appearance before the Judiciary Committee that some of those jurisdictional strikes could be handled by the men at the top exerting influence, pressure, or advice on the leaders down the line.

THE PRESIDENT: Theoretically, grand; and works out in a very large percentage of the cases. You have seen a lot of potential local jurisdictional disputes and strikes where the local people were pretty hot under the collar against each other, and you have got lots of cases where a little advice from the top has settled them. I would say the overwhelming majority of cases are settled by advice from the head people in Washington, or

in other places where the top of the union is; on the other hand, there are a few cases where the local people would not listen to advice from the top; and that's about the size of it.

Q Mr. President, the question of drafting workers from the nondefense industries --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Is the question of drafting workers into defense industries where there are shortages a part of your study?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not drafting them -- certainly not.

Q Mr. President, have Senate leaders indicated when they expect the Lend-Lease Bill to pass?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, why don't you have the school children bring in tin cans?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have quite a plan to bring in tin cans when we need the tin.

Q You said the reason why collecting was bad was because it was so costly.

THE PRESIDENT: The transportation is costly. You can get your actual stuff brought in cheaply, say, to Hyde Park Village; but to get it to the plant where the detinning is done is a pretty costly thing.

Q If you get to the point where you don't have the tin, you will do that?

THE PRESIDENT: We have plenty of tin today. There is no shortage in tin; it's nickel there's a shortage in.

Q Are you going to cut it off for civilian uses, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not that I know of, Pete (Mr. Brandt).

Q Would you say that the delay in passing the Lend-Lease Bill is having a serious effect?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess I better not answer that. (Pause) You are all aware

of the fact that I have stated -- oh, I think for a couple of months, since it first went in -- that perhaps a delay at this time, in February or the early part of March, does not affect immediate aid to the democracies -- delivery of it -- but that every day's delay now will affect deliveries to the democracies a little later on. That is a perfectly fair way of putting it.

Q Mr. President, do you see any necessity of giving the National Guard an additional six or twelve months' training?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; what do you mean?

Q There's a story out that the War Department, or General Marshall, thinks that is necessary and will ask for legislation on the subject.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a new one on me; I'll ask about it.

Q That's the story I got.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

THE PRESIDENT: (holding up the clock) Still 10.30! That's the shortest Press Conference we ever held! (Laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #725,
Executive Offices of the White House,
March 11, 1941, 4.10 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I am keeping you all busy now. You'll have to keep jumping to keep up with me!

Q Fast work!

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and going to be more fast work, too!

Q Mr. President, did you sign the bill with six pens?

THE PRESIDENT: I used six pens -- for the leaders.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: At quarter to four or ten minutes to four, the Bill (referring to Bill 1776) was duly signed in the presence of the Press photographers and the Picture people; and immediately thereafter -- after they left the room -- the second step happened; after talking the thing over with the Army and Navy authorities, the first list of material was approved -- Army and Navy material which will go, the greater part of it, to Britain; a portion of it will go to the Greeks. The items, of course, involved must of necessity and fairness be kept until such time that the disclosure of their military identity will not be of benefit to anybody else.

At the meeting this morning on that line, I told the Senate and House members of the Committee -- we talked it over and I made the suggestion that they appoint from the two Appropriations Committees a small subcommittee that would feel entirely free to come down here at any time and be kept in complete and constant touch with everything that is being done under Bill No. 1776.

Of course there is nothing that could not be disclosed except some

of these things which probably we should defer announcing -- the type of material or amounts involved -- for purely military reasons for a reasonably short time. This particular list of items relates both to the Army and Navy. It is not a very large amount. I only have at the present time the figures showing the total original cost, because you will understand that that does not necessarily mean the billing price for the reason that a great many of these articles are out of date or surplus and haven't got the same monetary value that they had when they were manufactured a good many years ago.

And then I -- well, you saw the gentlemen when they went out; they told you about the letter tomorrow which will be the usual -- I have forgotten whether it is deficiency or supplementary estimate letter -- I don't know -- to the Speaker; not a message to the Congress, because this is an appropriation bill and goes in the form of a deficiency or supplementary estimate to the Speaker, and, under the rules of the House, is referred by him to the Appropriations Committee; and then they start hearings, I think, the day after. My letter will go up at noon tomorrow, and they will start the hearings on Thursday; so there is no waste of time in this procedure.

Q Mr. President, you said you had a total of the value; are you going to tell us what that is?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, you called these supplemental or deficiency; --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know whether they call it deficiency or supplemental.

Q Usually supplemental is for the current year; is this for the current year?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What I am getting at, will there be another one for next year?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You better ask them on the Hill what they want to call it; really, it is an appropriation bill under H.R. 1776.

Q Mr. President, you have indicated that this list of stuff is current material, surplus, et cetera.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I haven't read the bill lately; that bill mentioned a certain amount.

THE PRESIDENT: Up to a billion,three hundred million; the amount arrived at -- the value of this stuff -- will come out of that billion, three hundred million.

Q I was going to ask you further, sir, if you will permit me, if there have been any terms or any dicker; have you made a deal with these people?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will that be made public at any time you do so?

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as it is proper. Of course the congressional people will know about it, but it won't be made public until the items themselves are made public. You couldn't do any figuring on dollars and cents unless you knew what the items were.

Q Mr. President, is this a lending or a leasing procedure?

THE PRESIDENT: I give it up; I'm not interested.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us when the proposed aid to China may be forthcoming?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Aid for China; I heard you mention Britain and Greece.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all I've done today! (Laughter)

Q Will there be aid to China?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will there be aid to China?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess so.

Q Would it depend, sir, on the report that Lauchlin Currie makes to you?

THE PRESIDENT: That might have something to do with it; I wouldn't say it would depend on it.

Q Mr. President, will some of this be out of the 1942 budget?

THE PRESIDENT: There is not much we can talk about yet because it is still in the process of working out the thing on the Hill as to whether certain types of things taken out by anticipation, things already ordered but not yet delivered, already appropriated for and ordered and which would fall into the one-billion-three-hundred-million-dollar category -- as to whether they should be deducted, or any portion of them, from the seven-billion-dollar appropriation or not. That is a thing that is really a legislative matter and we hadn't worked it out this morning. There are too many categories of things in there to make an over-all statement; some might and some might not.

Q Mr. President, could you generalize at all as to saying whether ships -- naval or merchant -- are involved?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could you give us ship categories?

THE PRESIDENT: Say Army and Navy -- not Maritime Commission.

MR. GODWIN: (apparently to himself) That's the stuff!

Q Mr. President, will the subcommittee of Congress get this information in connection with that 90-day report provided in the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: That's an entirely separate thing; this would be in addition to that.

Q Do you have a system of bookkeeping set up, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you have a system of bookkeeping set up to keep account of all this?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, are you planning to discuss this with the country in a radio speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so; I think I will probably go on the air sometime in the next week.

Q Is Mr. Currie back in Washington yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of; he landed yesterday and he is on his way across the continent. I don't know whether he is coming by plane?

Q He's coming by train.

Q Could you tell us now about his mission out there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

MR. GODWIN: May Craig wants to know if you are going away.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would like to go away; I'm just crazy to go away.

MR. GODWIN: In other words, are you going to take one of those trips?

THE PRESIDENT: I would give anything in the world to; I need a little holiday. I've been here pretty steady since the fourteenth, and I still have a bit of "co'd id my dose". And I want a little sunlight. I am going to do it just as soon as I get the chance -- when and where, I don't know.

Q Is it proper for you to say whether any of this equipment is now on the way?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no, none of it is on the way -- at least it wasn't until five minutes to four, because I didn't approve it until then. We work fast, but there <u>are</u> limitations! (Laughter)

Q Do you know when the first of this might be dispatched?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any idea. It would depend a little bit on when the ships go.

Q My point, sir, is whether the material has been moved up to embarkation points in anticipation.

THE PRESIDENT: There has been nothing done on boxing this ahead of time.

Q Is any one individual in charge of the transfer of this material?

THE PRESIDENT: Any one individual? Oh, no, it's done through the regular channels.

Q Mr. President, now that the Lend-Lease Bill is passed, do you anticipate acting in the near future on the Supreme Court vacancy?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, have you any news on the program of voluntary home defense?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Anything on the St. Lawrence, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No -- all frozen up. (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Durno) There have been reports that you might declare a complete national emergency now that the bill has been signed.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't even heard that report.

Q It has been reported.

Q Mr. President, we have a supreme court vacancy in Puerto Rico, too; will you fill that?

THE PRESIDENT: I was thinking there was some news on it about a month ago; didn't I fill that?

Q There were two, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what it was -- I filled one.

Q Do you contemplate making a fireside chat soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably sometime in the course of the next week.

Q Do you expect to receive a report from Surgeon General Parran who has just returned from London?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't put it that way, but I suppose Dr. Parran will take the first opportunity he has to come in. I don't think it will be any formal report.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President! Get them out of here!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #726,
Executive Offices of the White House,
March 14, 1941, 10.45 A.M.

MR. GODWIN: Good morning sir!

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. I think we are going to have a very dull session today.

Q You have a lot of news, haven't you?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I kept you fellows busy the first three days of this week, though, didn't I?

Q You certainly did!

THE PRESIDENT: Plenty of stuff!

MR. LINZ: Some of us like to work.

THE PRESIDENT: You don't, do you? You really enjoy it?

MR. LINZ: I do!

THE PRESIDENT: Have to put him on a destroyer! (Laughter)

Q "Lieutenant" Linz, of the Destroyer! (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: You have had a big week so far; I haven't got very much more, except to make a rather unusual request: I'm asking a press association if I might speak at their dinner. The White House Correspondents' Association is having a dinner tomorrow night, and I would very much like to make a speech.

MR. REYNOLDS: (President of the White House Correspondents' Association) I think, sir, that could be arranged. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It is, what? -- this topsy-turvy world, the President pleading with the press association to be allowed to address them! If that is all right, Tom (Mr. Reynolds), I'll go on the air at the same time.

MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

Q That's on the record?

THE PRESIDENT: This is on the record.

Q Will that be on the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Will that be the fireside chat you have been planning on?

THE PRESIDENT: It may be what could be called fireworks! (Laughter)

Q Firewater!

MR. REYNOLDS: What time would you like to go on the air, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Nine-thirty, if that fits in with your excellent entertainment?

MR. REYNOLDS: That's all right.

Q Will that be thirty minutes, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your labor discussions?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing today -- won't be any news until next week; they're talking, that's all.

Q Can you tell us what the general topic of this speech will be, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I think it will cover a multitude of sins. (Laughter)

Q That will be the fulfillment of your statement the other day that you might have something to say.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The only other thing I want to call your attention to -- my mind goes back to 1934, when there was set up a thing called the Stabilization Fund; and if you will read the Congress and the columnists from that time on, you will see from that time on, undoubtedly, year after year, about the facts being kept from the public and so forth and so on. Well, every year of course we file a report on what has happened

to that two-billion-dollar fund. That's a lot of money; and a whole lot of people, of course, have tried to -- what shall I say? -- to get their fingers on that for this, that, and the other excellent purpose. We have managed to keep that fund intact from any what might be called depredations on it.

At the same time, the truth, I think, is a pretty good illustration of the fact that the American Government is not wholly -- what shall I say? -- amateurish in the financial part that it plays in the country, and not just a bunch of rank amateurs, as so often charged. This two billion is not only intact today -- you know it doesn't draw any interest; in other words, it is in the Treasury; naturally, it is not in bonds because it has to be available at any time -- it is not only intact but, through transactions, it has gained twenty-two million dollars, which, for a bunch of rank amateurs in finance, isn't so bad!

I just call your attention to that, for I think it is rather interesting, considering the things that have been said all around this country about that fund, that it would be gradually chipped away and chipped away and through bad management would lose a lot of money. It has done a lot of good by stabilizing world trade -- all kinds of world trade, both before the outbreak of the war and since.

Of course in the last year there haven't been so many transactions in it, but there have been some; and it has made a profit of twenty-two million dollars, now in the treasury. I thought I would call you attention to that.

Q Mr. President, the names of both Wendell Willkie and Bernard Baruch have been mentioned as possible members of the new mediation board; are you considering either of those gentlemen?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it in the paper for the first time; and I haven't thought of any names of anybody.

Q Mr. President, can anything be done with that profit on the Stabilization Fund?

THE PRESIDENT: It is maintained as a part of the fund.

Q Mr. President, will any part of that Stabilization Fund be used to finance national defense expenditures?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q (Mr. Brandt) Does this fund expire on January 30, 1941?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, Pete.

Q It has been extended two or three times.

Q I think it expires in June.

Q Mr. President, what kind of report did Mr. Currie bring back?

THE PRESIDENT: He is in the process of presenting it to me; he hasn't finished.

Q (Mr. Essary) Mr. President, did you see the story in the Baltimore Sun this morning on the transfer of naval and merchant ships to Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: What's that, Fred?

MR. ESSARY: A very interesting story, Mr. President (laughter); if you haven't seen it, you probably will.

THE PRESIDENT: Fred, was that the same kind of story as that UP story -- "learned on good naval authority, high naval authority"? (Laughter)

MR. ESSARY: I think that fact was stated, among others.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know the Sun would be as inaccurate as all that!

MR. ESSARY: Inaccurate??

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, the Baltimore Sun had a very definite statement about it; if you will get Mr. Essary to relate that statement, perhaps you can comment on it.

THE PRESIDENT: What was it, Fred? This is getting interesting!

MR. ESSARY: You are crowding me a little bit now! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Fred, entirely off the record, have you read the story?

(Laughter)

MR. ESSARY: I wrote it, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hadn't seen it, so I can't comment on it.

MR. ESSARY: Well, I'll send you a copy, sir.

Q Mr. President, certain people who seem to be naval authorities claim that there will be all or part of a great number of ships transferred to Britain; they include in that what we call "mosquito" boats, fast torpedo boats --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Whale boats? (Laughter)

Q I don't believe whale boats were mentioned, sir, but they might be useful. Is it correct to say that that is entirely inaccurate?

THE PRESIDENT: Entirely!

Q But that wouldn't cover new boats?

THE PRESIDENT: There has been absolutely no consideration given to any specific type of ship or any specific boats which I could tell you about now; of course there may be -- as you know -- there may be transfers in the future; but I couldn't write a story on it because nothing has been decided.

Q What about cargo ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Cargo ships? -- We haven't got many at the present time that you could transfer.

Q Are Springfield rifles included in the list of things to be sent to Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, now you are asking me, piecemeal, to tell you the list of things that were authorized the other day; and if I start saying yes

or no on the individual items, by the process of elimination you will find out what there was. Now, actually -- make this the last time -- actually, there were no Springfield rifles on that list; but don't ask any more.

Q (Mr. Brown) Mr. President, how is it that while the funds of the invaded countries are frozen, the German and Italian funds are not?

THE PRESIDENT: Constantine (Mr. Brown), I think you better ask the State Department on that.

MR. BROWN: Well, they tell me to ask you.

THE PRESIDENT: It's one of those things where a little knowledge on the part of the President is awfully dangerous. I wouldn't trust myself to make an answer.

Q Mr. President, now that you have seen the Secretary of Labor, Mr. Knudsen, and Mr. Hillman on this top board you discussed the other day, can you give us any more detail on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet; I hope to have something next week.

Q You plan to discuss this matter with Mr. Green (William Green, of the A.F.L.) today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You will also discuss it with other labor leaders -- Mr. Murray? (Philip Murray, of the C.I.O.)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I have already, and am going to do it again.

Q Mr. President, is this Government making any attempt to bring the C.I.O. and A.F.L. together at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you made any travel plans yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I am still hopeful -- very hopeful. I --

(interposing)
Q/ About when?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- need to make up sleep. (Answering the question) Just as soon as I can. As a matter of fact, I am fairly free, because I haven't got any dates between next Monday night, when we have the opening of the Mellon Gallery, and the 29th, when they have that dinner. That is 10 days -- 12 days, rather -- and I hope sometime in that 12 days to get away somewhere for about a week -- if things don't break badly.

Q What is the 29th, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Jackson dinner.

Q Mr. President, can you say now -- do you care to discuss aid to countries other than those mentioned -- Britain, China possibly, and I think Greece comes in on that? It seems to me from conversations with the embassies that some of them think they are going to get a piece of it. Can you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the bill is pretty clear.

MR. GODWIN: It certainly is!

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, without naming any specific nations, you might call them A, B, C, and D that are not in the process of resisting aggression by armed forces, any one of them that should be compelled to do so or decide to do so, would fall into that defense category as provided for in the bill.

Q How about China, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: That is coming along all right.

Q In the case of China, sir, has there been any question as to who the arms would be used against if they were sent to the government of Chiang Kai-Shek?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are we shipping anything to Turkey now?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the proposal for direct tax on salaries to help pay for the arms purchases?

THE PRESIDENT: I read about it. I am seeing the Secretary of the Treasury and one or two of his generals sometime today or tomorrow to have a preliminary talk about, primarily, the tax receipts as they are coming in. They --

Q (interposing) They are away ahead of expectations.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They are pretty well ahead.

Q The Irish Defense Minister has come over here to ask aid.

THE PRESIDENT: So I read.

Q Any decision been made as to what category Ireland comes in?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have had no official notice. I was told by the Legation.

Q (Mr. Brown) May we ask you, sir, who the arms might be used against?

THE PRESIDENT: In Ireland?

MR. BROWN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a very delicate subject, Constantine. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you given any consideration to revision of the Social Security Program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, a good deal. I don't think there's any real story on it that could be detailed; but the general idea is what I expressed several times last autumn, and that is the coverage in regard to numbers of human beings and a greater equalization of benefits for old people; that is something that we want to go ahead with -- in other words, make a little progress on each year. On the whole, it is better covering a few more each year and raising the standard each year than it is go right to

Utopia all at once. The number of people in this country covered -- old people -- is not adequate. There ought to be a great many more millions brought in who are not in today; and consequently the old-age benefits ought to be increased through a period of years so that it is not so much dependent on State grants. Today, in the richer states that have taken action, the actual old-age benefit is what? -- oh, I don't know -- three or four times -- five times greater than it is in states which have a much lower per capita wealth; and they are working at the present time on some kind of what might be called a formula which would base Federal grants more nearly on the per capita wealth of the inhabitants of any given state -- in other words, that wouldn't penalize the richer states and require those states to contribute a larger proportion; but it would call on the Federal Government to add to the Federal assistance in the case of the poorer states; and at the same time not give any --

Q (interposing) How much?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- at the same time not give any state the right or privilege of falling down on their own obligations. In other words, they would have to give what would be -- through their legislatures -- what would be a fair share from their own taxes, based on the wealth of the state. You can't ask for some states in the country that have a very low per capita wealth -- therefore, a very low taxable base -- you can't ask them to give more than the proportion of their taxable base of wealth, but you can ask them to give up to their taxable base of wealth.

Well, it is one of those formulas which I think can be worked out, and it would result in a gradual increase of the people who, unfortunately live in poor states which are today giving much too little in the way of old-age pensions; and it will help where the -- when you come down

to it through a humanitarian point of view -- help where the need is greatest.

Q How long, sir, do you think it will be before some such development might be expected?

THE PRESIDENT: I think in the spring.

Q Have you any observations on whether we should assist France in getting food?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, except to throw out a suggestion --

Q (interposing) Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- except to throw out a suggestion, and that is that people should be fairly clear in their facts about the food situation in Europe before they come to conclusions.

Q Do you mean by that, sir--

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't mean! I said I threw it out as a suggestion! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, in connection with the food situation, have you received any particularly desperate appeals from Belgium, Holland, Norway, or Denmark, which are just as badly stricken as France?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There again it is a question of fact, isn't it?

Q I am trying to make the differentiation between those countries that are occupied and those not occupied. I am talking about food for unoccupied France.

THE PRESIDENT: That depends very largely again on the question of fact. There is probably not much question -- I can say this -- there isn't much question that the actual lack of foodstuffs at the present time is greatest in Spain -- without much question. That raises a question of a certainty -- I am talking about unoccupied places -- a certainty that none of that

will go outside of that particular place.

Q Did you say there should be a certainty?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, there should be.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #727,
Executive Offices of the White House,
March 18, 1941, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only thing of interest I have is that I have been taking up with the Secretary of Agriculture and with Dr. Parran, who is just back from Britain, the problem of food and related things which will be needed in Britain in the future; and while I am away I am asking the Secretary of Agriculture and Dr. Parran and several others to work up what might be called a program relating to types of food that are needed and things like -- what do you call it? -- vitamins, of which there are various new forms, I am told --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) I'll say!

THE PRESIDENT: Earl Godwin and I never found it necessary to take vitamins -- we get along quite well without them.

MR. GODWIN: Don't we! (Mr. Godwin weighs about 235 pounds.)

Q (Mr. Brandt) What about that milk -- that "homogenized" milk? (Mr. Godwin's radio sponsor is Thompson's Dairy, which features homogenized "vitamin D" milk.)

THE PRESIDENT: And they are going to let me have a report on it. I think the British are sending over somebody to represent their Food Ministry, so we will get a pretty good picture. We have plenty of food-stuffs -- agricultural commodities -- as we know, in this country; it's more a question of working out a schedule for the whole thing. I think that's about all.

Q That is in relation, sir, to the money that is in the Lend-Lease Appropriation Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Some would come out of that and some wouldn't.

Q Mr. President, before this gets into a world discussion, may I ask a local question?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q There's a story carried in our paper today about the diversion of 50 to 75 million cubic feet of water on the Ontario side of the St. Lawrence; is there anything on that now?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so; I think you will probably get something in a very few days. Have I (turning to Mr. Early) actually sent it to the Congress?

MR. EARLY: No.

THE PRESIDENT: There'll be something very soon.

Q Is there to be additional diversion on this side, too?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

(The question was repeated.)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think Niagara enters into this picture at all; this is the St. Lawrence. I think Buffalo is still safe. (Laughter)

Q I am afraid it isn't if that is the case!

THE PRESIDENT: I think this is a thing that has been all ready to shoot as soon as we get a final word on it; if we don't get final word before I leave, it will go up to Congress as soon as we do.

Q Can you tell us anything on your trip, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going off to get a little sunlight -- to be gone a week or ten days.

Q Mr. President, I believe the last time convoys were mentioned in this Conference you made the remark about that being the first step toward shooting. I understand there have been reports you were considering

early convoying of ships.

THE PRESIDENT: That has been going on four or five years, hasn't it?

Q What has been going on?

THE PRESIDENT: Those reports.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I thought; I haven't paid any attention to them yet.

Q Mr. President, may I bring you back to that food question, sir? Your idea is for food to go to Britain and to other democracies at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It is all in there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q At the last Conference you mentioned Spain as being in need.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and unoccupied France; we have just sent some food there, haven't we?

Q Are sending some now.

Q Is this report you requested solely devoted to the British food stuffs?

THE PRESIDENT: No; of course that would be the major part of it; but it includes others, too.

Q There is some concern about the application of State sales taxes and excise taxes on materials that are imported into states for use in Government contracts -- raw materials and parts. There has been some indication that would be taken up with you and that there might be some legislation to clear that up.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you better ask the Treasury Department, because it is a terribly complex thing. I couldn't begin to go into it; I would make a mistake in the second sentence if I did. It is under study. I

think the only thing you can say is that, naturally, under the present system, the state has the right to impose certain excise taxes, but in the long run it doesn't make the state very popular in Government supply work if the state superimposes extraordinary or out-of-line excise taxes at this particular time on new industries. I think that is the best way.

Q The question has come up in the California situation because of a ruling that those taxes could not be added to the contract prices. The Army and Navy have placed contracts for ships and what-not.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on the individual contract. I don't think there is any rule on it. It's a very technical discussion -- that whole thing -- and I couldn't begin to answer it.

Q I'm anxious to duck it, myself!

Q Do you have any information about submarines and battle cruisers in the Atlantic?

THE PRESIDENT: You know what I know.

Q Mr. President, what is the situation on your defense labor board?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along very soon.

Q Will it be an eleven-man board?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you yet; there'll probably be action to set up machinery before I go away tomorrow; as to whether the personnel will be announced, I don't know; I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us whether this St. Lawrence matter will be in the form of a treaty or an agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: An agreement.

Q Will it require congressional action or approval?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; it will cost money.

Q Mr. President, getting back to the labor board, will that be by Executive Order?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, in this matter of food for France; have we released two cargoes of food to be sent to the American Red Cross?

THE PRESIDENT: The Red Cross over here is taking it up at the present time; but whether they can send two cargoes over I don't know. I don't believe they have completed arrangements yet but they are taking it up at the present time. Of course that means taking it up with quite a lot of people.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us when we may start turning over some ships to the British for that "bridge across the Atlantic"?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a secret.

Q Mr. President, I am still not clear as to whether the St. Lawrence document is the whole seaway or only power development -- the document which you will send to Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

(Question repeated.)

THE PRESIDENT: It means building a dam, for power.

Q Doesn't involve the seaway?

THE PRESIDENT: Not unless you put a lock in the dam.

Q That's what I want to know.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, last week I think you discussed the Irish situation; but now Mr. de Valera has, in a speech, requested food and arms and said he is sending someone over here; do you know anything more about it?

THE PRESIDENT: How are they going to get them in?

Q Is that a big problem?

THE PRESIDENT: Wouldn't you think so?

Q Haven't you authority to change the war zone?

THE PRESIDENT: I am just answering that question with another question.

Q Mr. President, what is the present status of the volunteer home defense thing?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably there'll be a final report on it to me from various people by the time I get back, and then pretty quick action after that.

Q Mr. President, did you see the new basic policy of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies in the paper this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q I think there is still some confusion as to whether this St. Lawrence thing is to be for seaway or power dam.

THE PRESIDENT: No, you will have to wait until you see it. Of course you will have to remember one thing, and that is this, that the cost of a dam is about -- well, it would add only about 10 percent if you put a lock in it. That is No. 1. If you build a power dam and you see it costs you -- what? -- 200 million dollars, it would only cost you about 20 million more to put a lock in it. That's just common sense in this awful polemic -- is that the right word for it? -- discussion.

Q I don't know; it's very vague to me. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Then you have to remember another fact, and that is that I can't build any ocean-going steamers in the Great Lakes today. That's pretty tough, isn't it? And then you have to remember a third fact: I can't take any existing steamers off the Great Lakes for ocean service today unless they are less than 270 feet long, and most of them are more than that.

Q Well, of course it's all right with New England if you don't.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course New England, as well as some other parts of the country, should think about the whole country.

Q Mr. President, are you advised of the German submarine in our waters?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read.

Q Have you anything to say about it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q (Mr. Wright, of Buffalo Evening News) Mr. President, this is the last gasp on this: but is this, at the same time, the authorization and appropriation you are asking for? In other words, we heard there was going to be a joint resolution to authorize this thing as a national defense measure. Is this that you are going to recommend the authorization and appropriation all wrapped up in one package?

THE PRESIDENT: Jim, I don't know what form the thing will take.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference with Milo Warner?

THE PRESIDENT: No; he told me about his trip on the other side and gave me a copy of the report he made to the executive committee of the Legion at Indianapolis the other day, which I think has been printed.

Q Yes.

Q In the item of 200 million dollars for repairs -- expenses for repairs to British vessels -- where will those repairs be made?

THE PRESIDENT: Where will it go?

Q Yes, where will the repairs be made?

THE PRESIDENT: Obviously, they could not be made in the Great Lakes; that is the closest answer I can give you on that.

Q Would they be in navy yards or private yards?

THE PRESIDENT: They can't be made in the Great Lakes. They might be made at Newburgh, New York; you know we have been trying to get a shipyard there -- before the campaign, especially (laughter), and we haven't got one yet.

Q I thought you had this all worked out, Mr. President, that you were going to put these submarines on a raft and float them down the Mississippi.

THE PRESIDENT: What's the matter with the barge canal and the Hudson River?

MR. WRIGHT: That's all right, only it doesn't start from Buffalo! (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: This is grand! -- sort of a "You-scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours" arrangement. (Laughter) We're all getting local -- and so's Maine! (Laughter)

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #728,
Upon Completion of the President's Inspection
of the Naval Air Station,
Jacksonville, Florida,
March 20, 1941.

(Captain Charles P. Mason, Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Florida, was present at this Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: (To Captain Mason) The Press is here. They will probably want you to do a little explaining to them. When did we break ground here -- about a year and a half ago?

CAPTAIN MASON: Sixteen months ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. I think the chief thing of interest is that in the first place it is absolutely modern and we broke ground only sixteen months ago. That's a pretty good illustration.

Q Tell us something about the number of people you have.

CAPTAIN MASON: Our allowance will be 3,500 station enlisted men, fourteen to sixteen hundred Aviation Cadets, and three thousand students in the trade school, with 480 officers as instructors for the whole station.

THE PRESIDENT: We are not only training the cadets, but also the trade school is awfully important.

CAPTAIN MASON: The trade school will turn out enlisted mechanics for the Navy. They started the flying field in August and gave it to us in December.

Q How soon do you expect to have the whole place finished?

CAPTAIN MASON: The present set-up is for the first of July.

Q How far ahead of schedule?

CAPTAIN MASON: Seven weeks ahead on the flying field and three months on some buildings. Two to three weeks ahead on the average.

Q How much money is invested in the plant?

CAPTAIN MASON: Twenty-five million, without the latest appropriation. The contract right now is twenty-five million. Sixteen million has been paid out.

Q What is going to be the total cost?

CAPTAIN MASON: Twenty-five million, but there are additions coming along all the time as the Administration expands.

Q Upwards of forty million dollars?

THE PRESIDENT: About forty million dollars.

Q Are you very well satisfied?

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly fine! Very much surprised to know we are as far along as this.

Q How does this place compare with Pensacola in size? How is it on personnel?

CAPTAIN MASON: Total personnel a little bit more than Pensacola. We have fewer Aviation Cadets but they do not have the trade schools. We have 514 cadets at present and 103 of them soloing already.

Q How many students will you turn out a month?

CAPTAIN MASON: Two hundred flying cadets -- six hundred from the trade school.

Q How long a course is it, Captain?

CAPTAIN MASON: Seven months, flying.

Q What's the trade school course?

CAPTAIN MASON: Depending on the rate studied for, four to five months. Maximum five, minimum four.

THE PRESIDENT: We will turn out about seven to eight thousand trade school graduates a year.

Q Do you plan to make any other inspections today?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing between here and the port of embarkation.

Q Is that still secret?

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CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #729,
Upon Completion of Inspection of
Fort Jackson, South Carolina,
March 31, 1941, 9:30 A.M.

(His Excellency Burnet R. Maybank, Governor of South Carolina and Major General William E. Shedd of the First Army Corps, Columbia, South Carolina, were present at this Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: I have just said to Burny (Governor Maybank) that you are now in South Carolina and I thought I would let him take the review of the Press instead of me.

GOVERNOR MAYBANK: We are glad to have you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: You get a pretty good idea of what has been done. This camp was acreage during the World War and practically abandoned. Later on, some of the National Guard troops came down and trained here in the summer. Nearly all of the World War buildings were gone completely. Most of the National Guard equipment was temporary and they were in tents. We did have the acreage, started in September and it is still March. It has all been done since September. There are 35,000 men in two divisions. One is the old square division, mostly National Guard, with a certain percentage of selectees put in it. The other is the new triangle division, which is Regular Army, plus a certain number of selectees. You will have to find out what the difference is between a square division and a triangle division. The square division is about 22,000 men --

GENERAL SHEDD: (interposing) Eighteen or nineteen thousand men.

THE PRESIDENT: A typical triangle division is about 12 to 14 thousand men. Of course eventually the triangle division will supersede the square

division as far as we can tell.

Q This is the biggest camp you have seen?

THE PRESIDENT: It is not the biggest one we have.

Q This is the first one where you have seen them out in the process of training?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

I can't think of anything else.

Q Can you tell us about the seizure of Italian ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I hate to spoil a good story for the boys who are still in Washington.

Q Can you tell us if it was done at your direction?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can make certain assumptions.

Q Can we make any about what is going to be done?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't cross creeks without a pontoon bridge. You saw them up there.

Q How did you like Columbia and the Governor's house --
(interposing)
THE PRESIDENT:/ I wasn't there this morning, but I have been there before. It is a very nice house that the Governor of South Carolina lives in there, and I had a very good breakfast there the last time I was in it.

(Referring to Fort Jackson) I think it is a great site and they have done a wonderful piece of work. The fact that they started in September and here it is still March and practically complete except for the trimmings -- flowers and pine trees. Young pine trees will come up and it will look like a million dollars next fall.

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CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #730,
Upon Completion of Inspection at
Fort Bragg, North Carolina,
March 31, 1941.

(Major General Jacob L. Devers, Commanding Officer, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, was present at this Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: Come in here, General, and answer some questions.

Q Mr. President, we are all being asked what we are going to do, whether we are going to keep the ships taken over or give them away.

THE PRESIDENT: Too far from salt water to reply to a question like that.

About the camp, we are on time here and within the cost estimate. This is the second camp today. Glad to have found that. (To General Devers) Is there any mystery about those guns?

GENERAL DEVERS: Not that I know of. There may be.

THE PRESIDENT: There are a number of 75's, World War 75's, I think, some of them are under that shed over there, which are about to leave here for Greece.

Q Any other material?

THE PRESIDENT: The new equipment is coming in in sufficient quantities for training purposes. That does not mean full equipment of each regiment or battalion, but there is sufficient new equipment coming in for training purposes. And we have two very interesting battalions -- colored engineers.

GENERAL DEVERS: We have one regiment of colored engineers and will have another June fifteenth.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the first time that has ever been done, and also two anti-aircraft regiments.

Q Can you tell us about any additional aid?

THE PRESIDENT: Just happened to think of that. Just happened to mention this.

Q May we say that this is not all that is going?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a fairly general statement -- it's good enough.

Q Are they reconditioned 75's?

GENERAL DEVERS: They are the split-trail.

THE PRESIDENT: They are World War, but they have the modern high-speed carriages.

Q Mr. President, --

(interposing)

THE PRESIDENT: /Frank (Frank Kluckhohn), you can be persistent, but you won't get anywhere.

Q Are you very well satisfied?

THE PRESIDENT: Very well. We are up to 40,000 men here now and it will get up to about 65,000 within about two months. Nearly all of the housing is finished. In that new section we just came through they are finishing the housing. This part around here with these white stucco buildings with red roofs is the permanent part of Fort Bragg that was started about 1928. We used this during the World War, but after the war we let it go to pieces until 1928, then started on these structures.

GENERAL DEVERS: We put one up here every thirty-two minutes, or is it twenty-eight minutes?

THE PRESIDENT: That's pretty good.

(To Press) I think you have received about everything.

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CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #731,
Executive Offices of the White House,
April 1, 1941, 4.12 P.M.

(Miss Hedda Hopper was a guest at this Press Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: What is the story about Bruce (Mr. Pinter, of the New York Herald Tribune) getting arrested?

Q They dragged him off to camp. He was three days overdue.

THE PRESIDENT: I just pardoned a fellow for that day before yesterday.

Q He is on his way back to Fort Bragg.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he get back here?

MR. EARLY: He just came in, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I think we ought to excuse him for being two days late.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have rather bad news this afternoon about a member of the White House Correspondents' Association -- about to be court-martialed. I think we can straighten that out all right. If any of you fellows get into similar trouble, let me know.

Q Can you fix a parking ticket, Mr. President? (Laughter) (No answer.)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news at all today. I am leaving out speculation entirely, and as far as news goes, there isn't any, except that I checked up this afternoon on what I had done in the last three days, since the signing of the 1776 Bill, in the way of putting it into effect, and I have a summary here -- daily summary -- that brings it up to this afternoon, showing that we have authorized out of the five items in the bill -- the Army, Navy, Treasury Department, and Department of Agriculture -- a total of a little over a billion; I think actually a billion, 80 million dollars out of those five items to be handled by

the four departments. That is something out of each item.

Q That means you have 300 million yet to come?

THE PRESIDENT: No, this is new procurement.

Q New procurement under the 1776 Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, where does the Treasury come in?

THE PRESIDENT: Miscellaneous.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the billion, three?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't got those figures here.

Q Mr. President, this takes the form of definite allocation of funds for specific departments?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, for specific things; in other words, not a lump sum; it's for specific things.

Q Can you give us a breakdown of --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can't give you any breakdown of those things.

Q Is this for new construction?

THE PRESIDENT: This is for procurement.

Q Can you define that?

THE PRESIDENT: No; orders -- placing orders.

Q That is for goods later to go under the 7 billion?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You didn't mention the Maritime Commission, sir; is that because there has been no allotment, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there are five items; there's something in each.

Q To refresh our memory, sir, could you give us the categorical heads of those five items?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I can't; I don't remember the language well enough. But

Item 1 is all kinds of Army material, and Item 2 was -- that's Item 1, I think it was Navy material too -- Army and Navy; Item 2 was aviation material; Item 3, as I remember it, was automotive material; Item 4 was agricultural material; Item 5 was miscellaneous material. I think there were only five items, and I don't remember what ships is under.

Q Was it all to Great Britain, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: To various countries -- more than one country.

Q More than two, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: More than <u>one</u> country. I see where you would lead to with that question.

Q Agricultural material means raw products or food?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, or processed.

Q Mr. President, is consideration being given to insure that these shipments get over on the other side?

THE PRESIDENT: That has been given out for about a year and a half; still being considered.

Q New plant construction in this, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't break down, because that's almost like itemizing.

Q Has determination been made as to which countries it is going to?

THE PRESIDENT: I said <u>more than one</u>.

Q Will China get any of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I said <u>more than one</u>.

Q In these allocations, are you operating on any formula whereby production would be prorated to this country and other democracies?

THE PRESIDENT: No, all you have to do is to read the appropriation bill; it is the regular appropriation bill. New material for the Army and Navy and the 7-billion-dollar appropriation bill is over and above all of that.

Naturally, nothing would be sent out of this country until it is finished.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask you a question about these ships in "protective custody"? I think the general public believes that those ships have been seized for American use; my question is, Is there any law at all that permits that?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is, Earl, that there isn't any news today. That's all I can tell you.

MR. GODWIN: Anyhow, I asked the question!

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q During the World War those ships were requisitioned and paid for?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Was that before or after we declared war?

THE PRESIDENT: After, I think. (Another newspaperman corroborated the President on this.)

Q Mr. President, referring to the lend-lease matter for a moment, have you any idea, sir, how soon that stuff will be moving over?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say in the next couple of years.

Q Mr. President, all or any part of this can be retained in this country, can't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; and as I said, it can't very well be shipped until it is made.

Q Can you give us any figure as to how much has been moved out of the one billion, three?

THE PRESIDENT: I will try to have those figures by Friday.

Q Those 75's from Fort Bragg are out of the billion, three?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, are you ready to announce a new merchant ship building program?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Without referring to figures, sir, could you tell us whether any of that material shipped abroad out of the one billion 300 million has reached a foreign country unhurt?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't had time to check up.

Q Have you consulted with Mr. Welles (the Under Secretary of State) about the protests on the ship seizures?

THE PRESIDENT: No; and I haven't even got the real story up to date. The last I heard was just what Bob Jackson (the Attorney General) told me over the telephone, which was a report which he got from the Treasury Department and he restated it to me from memory. That is all I have, and that is not very substantially different from what appeared in the papers this morning.

Q Mr. President, is there any news on your conversation with Secretary Wickard and Leon Henderson?

THE PRESIDENT: No, just the usual check-up.

Q Is Henderson going to head a new price division?

THE PRESIDENT: No, there is nothing in sight; he is going ahead on present work, which is pretty important.

Q Still in the Advisory Council?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q When we last talked with you, you hadn't heard the final report from Lauchlin Currie; have you anything for us now?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I read two volumes that "Lauch" brought back from China, on the boat, and they're extremely interesting; but I haven't had a chance to talk over the two volumes with "Lauch". I saw him about two minutes ago.

Q Are they optimistic as to China's future?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you would have to read both volumes before you could say. (Laughter)

Q Have you taken up the St. Lawrence Waterway question yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't done anything about it.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment to make on the Army here, as to Fort Jackson and Fort Bragg?

THE PRESIDENT: I was very much pleased. I think all of you who were with me thought it was very good performance. The selectees in a great many cases worked in with the existing National Guard and Regular Army units. It is very, very good for the health; those who were there saw that. A number of them were a little overweight, but most of them had come down to normal within the last month or two, and were better off as the weeks went by. Some who were underweight were getting really built up, because, as a rule, we add about 15 pounds to the average person who comes into the Army or Navy.

Q Suppose you take Reynolds! (Laughter) (Reference was made to Mr. Thomas F. Reynolds, head of the White House Correspondents' Association.)

THE PRESIDENT: I mean averaging it up, it's good; we would only put perhaps 10 pounds on Reynolds! (Laughter) (He probably weighs well over 200 now.)

MR. GODWIN: I lost a pound a day!

Q As a seafaring man, have you any observation to make on the Battle of the Ionian Sea?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I am not dead-sure as to whether it was in the Ionian Sea; in other words, practically all that we have got has been just what has appeared in the paper, and we won't probably get any report until the Admiralty gets it in London. Nothing has come through yet.

Q Have you anything to say about the labor situation? -- how about your telegram to the bituminous coal folks?

THE PRESIDENT: The only word was that they were still in session about an hour ago.

Q I believe you talked with the legislative group on the general question of legislation to control controversies in the defense situation; was there anything concrete outlined in that conversation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except, of course, the general idea that if we can -- what shall I say? -- the general labor and employer-employee situation can be worked out with existing machinery, in a mutual spirit of give-and-take, an understanding of the necessity of avoiding slowing down the defense program -- going to give it a fair trial before anything different is done.

Q Mr. President, are you pleased with the record to date of the Mediation Board?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you pleased with the record of the Mediation Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe I can answer questions Am I pleased at this or angry at that.

Q Do you think --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think it is going along all right.

Q What do you think of the Democratic leaders of the House taking a recess for ten days, beginning Thursday?

THE PRESIDENT: What have they got?

Q They have a few odds and ends left.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, don't you suppose we could get them back if something other than odds and ends should turn up within the next week or two?

Q In connection with Italy, have you any reason to believe that the Italian people would welcome a separate peace if they could get it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I could talk about that.

Q Were you informed of that telegram sent by Knox and Knudsen?

THE PRESIDENT: I read about it.

Q Do you care to say anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing I heard was that over half of the people went back to work.

Q That's what's in the news, at least.

Q Were you acquainted with their intention to do this before it was done?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think I can answer that, either; in other words, that is almost inquisitional as to what I had heard and what I had not. I can't answer that type of question.

Q Mr. President, are you planning to set up any kind of organization to handle the shipments to Britain -- not the actual shipments, but the channel of supplies?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nothing separate; there is lots of Government machinery.

Q Mr. President, there is a report that the United States is going to stabilize the American-Canadian dollar, dollar for dollar.

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it!

Q Mr. President, have you chosen a successor to Dr. Dykstra yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, could you say why no nomination has been sent yet to replace Mr. McReynolds on the Supreme Court?

THE PRESIDENT: Like Topsy -- growing up; hasn't growed up yet. (Laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #732,
Executive Offices of the White House,
April 4, 1941, 10.45 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in!

THE PRESIDENT: I think I said on Tuesday that I would try to get something on that billion, 3 -- that is, old material. These figures are necessarily very tentative. We have since -- well, this week -- taken about 500 million dollars' worth of old materials for the aid of democracies, that figure being what might be called an in-between figure; it is not a final determination of the value of any individual product. It represents an in-between figure, between the original cost and what might be called scrap value, and is therefore not a final -- only a tentative -- figure.

Then, since Tuesday, under the 7 billion, we have allocated enough money for 212 new merchant ships and, I think, about 50 to 60 new ways, plus funds -- preliminary funds -- for the repair of damaged merchant ships. I have no -- except a very general -- figure in my head as to that; it is about half a billion more, about 500 million for those new ships and the new ways.

And we are now in the process of studying and putting through Army, Navy and Agriculture allocations to about a billion and a half to 2 billion more.

That is the progress report.

Q Mr. President, repair of damaged ships -- will they be Italian and German ships?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, the first item you spoke of, when speaking of the business as not a final figure; I gather, then, sir, that that charge is not made

on the appropriation bill value of them as new?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us when it is estimated that the first of those 212 new ships would be ready?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say the end of this year.

Q Are they the "ugly duckling" type?

THE PRESIDENT: Both -- two types.

Q You have a billion, 580 up to now; you had --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What's this billion, 580?

Q You had a billion; now you have added 500 million more.

THE PRESIDENT: About 500 million more for shipping and ship repairs.

Q That brings it to a billion, 580; then you --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now in process.

Q That brings it up to 3½ billion already tentatively allocated.

THE PRESIDENT: No, because the last of it is under study.

Q You have a billion and a half under study?

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q Mr. President, when you refer to the repair of damaged merchant ships, do you mean foreign ships as well as our own?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, anything at all.

Q (by Mr. Reynolds) Mr. President, do you anticipate that the transfer of 212 new merchant ships will relieve the need for convoying?

THE PRESIDENT: Tom, I don't believe I can make a categorical statement on that.

MR. REYNOLDS: One more question: There were reports this morning that general staff talks had been conducted between the United States and Great Britain on the question of convoying.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course we have observers over there; that's all.

Q Is there any tentative study at present of the repair of warships?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, are all these new ways to be on the ocean -- the seaboard?

THE PRESIDENT: Necessarily, they are -- unfortunately. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, you spoke of 500 million under the 1 billion, 3; is that all to date, or have there been some previous allocations on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think that is all to date.

Q Mr. President, do you plan any further moves to get work going in places where work has stopped in defense production?

THE PRESIDENT: We are moving just as fast as we possibly can.

Q Mr. President, two ships -- the LOCKSLEY and the ROBIN HOOD -- carrying a number of tons of United States mail are supposed to have been tied up in Brooklyn by strikes since March 18. I think that is the first time mail has been tied up by strike. Have you got that under consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard of it.

Q There is a report that you might remove the combat zone on the Gulf of Aden in the Red Sea.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps it is a little premature to say whether I have or haven't; but obviously, in the waters of the Red Sea, if there is no fighting going on, we would consider withdrawing that area from the combat zone area. I think it is perhaps a few days premature.

Q Mr. President, could you give us any breakdown of the billion, 3 allocation?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean?

Q Of the material already on hand -- the nature of it.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no, not yet. Of course you have a pretty good slant on one or two things, such as guns for Greece.

Q On the ships again: you said there would be two types?

THE PRESIDENT: Two what?

Q I understood you to say there would be two types of ships.

THE PRESIDENT: One would be an "ugly duckling" and the other would be a ship.

(Laughter)

Q A swan?

THE PRESIDENT: One will be shaped, and the other will be, roughly, straight lines.

Q We didn't get clear the statement whether there has been allocation for repair of foreign warships.

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't broken it down yet. There have been no ships that have come in for repair. It is a very small sum.

Q There is a statutory allocation in the appropriation, isn't there?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The appropriation contains a statutory allocation for that, doesn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but that, of course, has to be reallocated to me; I have to wait until I get some ships here to repair. It's a relatively small, preliminary sum, and we do not know what the future will bring forth -- how many ships there will be to repair.

Q Are there not some German and Italian ships that could be repaired?

(Laughter)

Q Mr. President, what reports do you have on coal stoppage and its effect on defense production?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope very much they will be at work on Monday.

Q (by May Craig, representing Portland papers) Mr. President, can we find out where these new ways are?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there are any in Maine! (Laughter) There may

be, at that.

MISS CRAIG: Then can we find out where they are?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, pretty soon; better ask the Maritime Commission.

Q Any story in the fact there are to be two kinds of ships -- the "ugly duckling" and the real ship?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, was there anything said in your conference with the Yugoslavian Minister about aid to Yugoslavia?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Can you tell us anything more?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more, except that Yugoslavia has expressed the desire to acquire certain types of things -- materials and what-not; and we are going ahead to see whether we can get them for Yugoslavia or not.

Q Any condition?

THE PRESIDENT: No condition.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment to make on the action of the Department of Agriculture yesterday in lifting the prices on butter, eggs, chickens, and so on?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is primarily a stabilization matter; in the case of hogs, there is a desire to present a reasonable assurance to the hog grower that if he starts the fattening process by feeding more corn to the hog he will get a reasonable price for the hog meat; in other words, we want to encourage the fattening of hogs and the use of corn for that purpose. It takes some time to do it, and we believe that the farmers will now go ahead with that process.

In the case of dairy products, very much the same objective is given; because, obviously, with a heifer it costs something to turn that heifer

into a milk cow. We want to give reasonable assurance that the people who turn heifers into milk cows will be able to get a reasonable price for the butter or dried milk.

Q Mr. President, will your conference with Mr. Currie this afternoon have any bearing on aid to China?

THE PRESIDENT: He is going to make that famous report. He is lunching with me. This is the first chance I have had to talk with him. I have read the two books.

Q Then no determination of aiding China has been made yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I have to talk to him first.

Q Could you tell us whether the Yugoslavian Minister indicated the definite intention of his country to resist oppression?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think the matter was discussed.

Q Mr. President, will Mr. Currie speak to you as a representative of the Chinese Government? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: How about it, "Lauch"? (More laughter) (The reporter could hear no answer.)

Q Any comment on the recall of the Italian Naval Attaché?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you have all the facts. It is pretty well proven that a great deal of this sabotage was on the order of this Italian Naval Attaché; and of course it is an illegal thing; therefore, he ordered an illegal thing to be done by foreigners in the United States. There was only one thing to do in those circumstances.

Q Is similar action contemplated in the case of the Germans?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard about it.

Q Representative Vinson was down here yesterday. He has introduced two bills in the House -- one to prevent work stoppage and another to provide a

"cooling-off period". Could you give us any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read them, so I couldn't comment. As a matter of fact, there is only, at the present time, one really serious stoppage of work, and that is at Allis-Chalmers; and that is really a very bad situation. Something has got to be done about it, quite soon. I have asked for a little time -- not very much.

Q Mr. President, we couldn't hear what you said. Will you repeat that?

THE PRESIDENT: Foote, will you read that to them?

(The reporter then read the paragraph referred to.)

Q What do you mean by "a little time", sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not any eight or ten weeks more.

Q What could be done about it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: You see they are having a meeting before the National Mediation Board tomorrow at 10 o'clock; so I couldn't very well prejudge anyone before that.

Q Mr. President, have you any reports of Communist activities in connection with that strike?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; but of course that same thing applies to a good many other individuals in the United States -- not labor as a whole.

Q Could I infer from your statement, sir, that the Ford situation at present is not serious in regard to defense?

THE PRESIDENT: Not after only one day, or two days.

Q As a matter of fact, I wonder whether many defense orders in that plant are tied up?

THE PRESIDENT: Some on parts would affect other plants.

Q You say you don't regard it as serious?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. It's only the second day. Give them a day or two.

Q Mr. President, have you been in touch with the Governor of Michigan on that strike?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, that Allis-Chalmers thing: If I got the comment correctly, you asked for a little time -- time for whom?

THE PRESIDENT: Both -- everybody.

Q How do you mean when you say you have asked for a little time?

THE PRESIDENT: From the Press. (Laughter) In other words, I am asking the Press not to press today. (Laughter)

Q (by Mr. Godwin) The court really seemed to indicate that the Governor has the same object that the President has -- that they might "talk it over", to use that phrase; is that orthodox?

THE PRESIDENT: No; that's "iffy".

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #733,
Executive Offices of the White House,
April 8, 1941, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got two things here. One is a statement -- is it mimeographed Steve?

MR. EARLY: Not yet.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve will have it mimeographed and you can have it --

About the work of this new organization called the United Service Organizations for National Defense. Yesterday they announced their program of service to soldiers, sailors and defense workers. This work, of course,-- by way of explanation -- is essentially around the various camps, navy yards, and new plants, and provides for the recreation, welfare and spiritual needs of the young men and women who have answered, and will answer, the call to the National Defense. The six-member organizations of the United Service Organizations are fulfilling an essential and patriotic duty. This duty -- of maintaining morale on the home front -- is one in which every American shares. The Federal Government is doing its part. It stands squarely behind the United Service Organizations, and Congress has been asked to provide money -- to provide money. The national private organizations which have incorporated the United Service Organizations as an over-all planning body are: The Y. M. C. A.; Y. W. C. A.; Catholic Cummunity Service; Jewish Welfare Board; Salvation Army, and the Travelers Aid Society. They are to be congratulated on their vision and on the practical common sense of their plans for staffing and operating these 300 odd service centers. The local communities, both public and private organizations

are preparing to cooperate with them. It is only the groundwork, but what they need is the support of every individual citizen, and they should have united support. To facilitate their work throughout the country a national conference of community leaders, to be held in Washington, April 17, is in cooperation with the Federal Security Administrator, and the Secretaries of War and Navy.

Well, we have been working up towards that. We have got them altogether, and of course, if I was writing a story, I would emphasize the fact that we have got all of these organizations in under the same tent -- which is a perfectly magnificent thing, and didn't even happen in the World War.

Q What is that, after the Jewish Welfare, and before you got to Travelers Aid?

THE PRESIDENT: Travelers Aid?

Q The next to the last one.

THE PRESIDENT: Salvation Army. My Lord, you are not forgetting that! It is a great job. In other words, they are all sitting around the same table and working out a combination of their work.

The other thing I have got is a story which I got out of O.P.M., a new basis to show the progress of the work, and I don't want anybody to suggest that this is being given out with any ideas that we are viewing with pride. We are not -- are not satisfied. There is room for an awful lot more improvement; but it just shows the amount of work that has been done in the past three months, in comparison with the previous six months, in terms of disbursement. Now that is a new approach. It isn't in terms of X number of airplanes, or so many guns; it is in terms of disbursement. In other words, money actually spent

out of the Treasury for work done, and as you know, we don't spend the money out of the Treasury until the work is done. In terms of dollars -- in the first three months on these particular things -- the acquisition of defense material and construction for defense -- we have paid out in the first three months of 1941 one billion, eight hundred million dollars, whereas in the whole of the last six months of 1940 -- calendar year -- we only paid out one billion, four. On table number two -- put it on aircraft, ships and ordinance. Those three items in the last six months of 1940 we paid out an average of $116,000,000. a month, and the average of the first three months of this year we paid out an average of $197,000,000. per month. On new plant facilities during the whole of 1940 we only paid out $45,000,000., and in the first three months of 1941 we paid out $240,000,000. For bases, stations, and fortifications during the last six months of 1940, we paid out $330,000,000., and the first three months of 1941 we paid out $550,000,000.

Q 550 was that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: 550. Those figures, of course, do not include any payments on British orders.

Well, that is just to give a slant on the angle of money paid out -- actual disbursements, and the fact that we are very greatly accelerating it gives a slight comparison of things that have been done in the last three months -- I mean the three months of 1941 in comparison with the six months of 1940.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) But it is not to be taken, as I remarked before, as any satisfaction on my part with the progress of the program.

Still much too slow.

Q Mr. President, did you say there was some construction in that first item?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, in the third item.

Q No, the first.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes, that is over-all money. Your first item includes the other items that I mentioned. In other words, the last items I mentioned were in terms of millions.

Q Does the first item mean the total over-all?

Q Does it mean everything you have spent that money for has been delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: Or constructed.

Q Work done or delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, that includes things not only for our own use but also some that may have been transferred for Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think anything out of this has been transferred.

Q Mr. President, that would include partial payments for partially completed warships and things like that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How much do you think this should be accelerated in your own mind? You say it is much too slow.

THE PRESIDENT: More.

Q What is being done?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't give you a figure on that.

Q What is being done to do that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we will just keep on using 'chestnut burrs' all the time. You are familiar with the use of 'chestnut burrs' to make a mule go. (Laughter)

Q Can you identify the mule? (Laughter)

Q Who is the mule? (More laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to, you come from Missouri, Frank. (Laughter)

Q (Frank) I came from Minnesota, sir.

Q Mr. President, what are the main reasons why the progress is, as you say, much too slow?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, thousands, thousands of reasons.

Q I say the main.

THE PRESIDENT: Individuals -- mostly human beings.

Q Can you break that down? (Much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, do you agree with Mr. Biggers that the next hundred days are going to be crucial in our production program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and the next hundred after that (he laughs) and the next hundred after that probably. I can't see as far ahead as that.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Knudsen has endorsed this 'cooling off' period before strikes came up, and so has Mr. Biggers, and there seems to be general sentiment among the Defense officials. Can you state what your views are on such a program, since the labor situation seems to be a little easier now?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is working in that general direction.

Q Do you think it should be done through legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is working in that general direction at the present time.

Q Toward cooling off?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, in other words, we are looking forward to a result.

Q Mr. President, Secretary of the Navy Knox yesterday commended those newspapers and photographic agencies which made no reference to the arrival of the battleship MALAYA in New York harbor. That might have been

interpreted as a rebuke to those who did? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The editorials in those papers who did print the stories and did carry the pictures, were the lamest excuses to try to get square with our reading public that I have ever read.

Q Do you believe, sir, that voluntary censorship --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Do you think that the voluntary censorship as suggested was more effective?

THE PRESIDENT: I noticed some of the papers advocated the immediate clamping down of legal censorship, which is very interesting probably to all the other papers in the United States. I prefer to go along with the great majority of the newspapers in the United States at this time. I think that covers it.

Q Would you like to be quoted in words on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I much prefer to go along with the overwhelming majority of newspapers at this time.

(Reporter was asked to read back above statement, at the request of Mr. Godwin.)

Q Does that mean something more may be necessary later?

THE PRESIDENT: You can leave out 'at this time', because there is nothing else in sight.

Q Would you prefer that we leave that off, 'at this time'?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe the best thing to do is to add to it what I had, 'nothing else is in sight at this time'.

Q Mr. President, have you any late word on the coal and steel situations?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had anything -- the coal thing has actually been signed -- the agreement is still being edited.

Q Mr. President, is there anything --

(interposing)
THE PRESIDENT: /What?

Q What is the latest word on steel?

THE PRESIDENT: Steel? They have another week -- a week from today the men are to work.

Q Anything on the Ford situation, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The Ford situation? I haven't heard anything since yesterday, when Steve (Mr. Early) probably told you the Governor suggested that if Mr. Murray could go out there and be there today, instead of coming to Washington, as he had intended, he thought it would be helpful if I could send word to Mr. Murray that I could see him tomorrow or the next day, whenever he did come down to Washington, that he might be able to feel free to go out to the strike, so he said that to Mr. Murray and he went to Detroit instead of coming to Washington.

Q Do you think, on this international situation, that our arms will get to Yugoslavia in time to be of use?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Are the shipments being rushed?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, as fast as we can get them off.

Q Anything new on opening the Red Sea?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Mr. President, five Governors representing the Southern Governors Conference arrive here tomorrow for furthering defense industries. Do their efforts in that regard have your support?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let me tell you -- let me tell you a story. In the first place, this should not be regarded as -- what shall I say -- National -- National Defense. Proceeding on a basis of the benefit by dollars and cents to each and every State of the Union on a square mile basis or a population basis, we are trying to change, trying to

create National Defense on the basis of the greatest speed and efficiency, on a national basis.

Now, I can go on and point out that I had a certain group come in from certain States that have what might be called a rather severe winter climate -- three or four feet of snow -- they understood perfectly well when I explained to them that we could not put a camp of 60,000 men up in their State, except in the summer-time; and because we want these camps to operate all the year round, from the point of view of National Defense, we put them in another section of the country, where they could run all through the winter as well as all through the summer. In other words we weren't doing it on a geographical basis but on a climate basis, not an area basis or a sectional basis but on a climate basis.

In the same way, there are certain industries which from the point of view of efficiency ought to go where they have the best and cheapest access to raw materials, and the most practical and useful access to the labor -- type of labor -- that goes into it. Well, that means that there are certain areas, unfortunately, in the country, that do not have ready access to certain types of materials, or certain forms of labor.

Now in the South of course, they have a great many more of these camps than any other place in the country, that is on account of the climate. The Middle West and the East have probably a great deal more factory production allocated to them than in other parts of the country. That is solely from the point of view of efficiency. We are trying all the time, of course, to decentralize -- and it is working out pretty well -- in accordance with efficiency. I wouldn't want to put,

for instance, a steel plant up at the entrance to the Glacier National Park. I don't think it would work. I don't think that I would want to put an all-the-year-round camp of 60,000 men up at the mouth of the Glacier National Park. I don't think it would work in the winter time. We don't need that many ski troops. (Laughter) And so I think it will be a fairly easy thing to persuade these Governors of Southern States that they are getting a good deal, and we want them to have anything else they can handle for the efficiency of the whole national program.

Q Mr. President, will any of these Danish ships that were taken over be used to transport munitions to Yugoslavia?

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't got them yet for operating purposes. I am asking Congress for legislation, day after tomorrow, in regard to the purchase of certain foreign ships in our harbors. I can't tell you anything more about it, and I don't like to write the message today. I have to wait a little while.

Q We may assume, sir, that that will include some of the ships that have been seized?

THE PRESIDENT: They will be the Danish ships.

Q Will you specify the nationality?

THE PRESIDENT: Ships which should be purchased, or rather acquired under other forms of acquisition.

Q The German and Italian too?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say that would be a different form of acquisition, in view of the fact that they violated American laws.

Q Mr. President, did you discuss this Danish question with Mr. de Kauffmann (the Danish Minister) today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Did you have his acquiescence to it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, there was a bill introduced in the House recently that has been discussed with certain people at the Maritime Commission, providing for the chartering of these ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly; the same general idea. Charter or purchase, it doesn't make much difference.

Q Mr. President, you may have answered this question sometime before. Is there any law under which you can acquire these German and Italian ships other than purchase?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think so.

Q And may be condemned?

THE PRESIDENT: After all, things like that -- as I have said several times before, if the Federal Government in times of emergency -- mind you this is not a full emergency -- can take away your ship, Frank, (Frank Kluckhohn of the New York Times), your yacht (laughter), against your will, you see, that is called the old "Right of Eminent Domain". Well, if they can do it to an American citizen -- the yacht in our harbor -- I think probably the Federal Government would have the right in a future emergency to use the old "Right of Eminent Domain" against some foreign ship.

Q But that would be only under a full emergency, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is the way I construe it, although I think probably you can get legal opinion to say that I can do it, even under the present limited emergency.

Q You can condemn a building under "Eminent Domain" without emergency.

THE PRESIDENT: You have to have legislation.

Q Mr. President, when you take by "Eminent Domain" it is for the use of the Government? Could you devote it to the use of another government?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not necessarily. You could if you wanted to -- if you were at war with the other government.

Q Mr. President, yesterday you saw Governor Lehman and some of the New York Power Authority people. Can you tell us whether or not you have deferred the St. Lawrence power?

THE PRESIDENT: We decided to devote the next two weeks to a study stage of cooperation between the two -- State of New York and Federal Government.

Q Did you say 'study stage'?

THE PRESIDENT: Study stage for about two weeks.

Q Mr. President, I am not quite sure on this ship business -- on German and Italian ships, you do think they have some legal way?

THE PRESIDENT: Forfeiture.

Q Forfeiture? That would be under sections 2 and 3 of the Espionage Act?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, you would have to show me the bill.

Q That would be through existing legislation at any rate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q This is a full or limited emergency?

THE PRESIDENT: What we have got now is limited.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

FOR THE PRESS IMMEDIATE RELEASE APRIL 8, 1941

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Yesterday, in New York, the United Service Organizations for National Defense announced their program of service to soldiers, sailors and defense workers. In providing for the recreation, welfare and spiritual needs of young men and women who have answered -- and will answer -- the call of national defense, the six-member organizations of the U.S.O. are fulfilling an essential and patriotic duty.

This duty -- of maintaining morale on the home front -- is one in which every American shares. The Federal Government is doing its part. It stands squarely behind the U.S.O. program and Congress has been asked to provide money for building and equipping the necessary club houses and community centers. The national private organizations which have incorporated the U.S.O. as an over-all planning body -- the YMCA, the YWCA, the Catholic Community Service, the Jewish Welfare Board, the Salvation Army, and the Travelers Aid Society -- are to be congratulated on their vision and on the practical common sense of their plans for staffing and operating these 300 odd service centers. In local communities, both public and private organizations are preparing to cooperate to the fullest extent in this Nation-wide effort.

But imperative as all this is, it is only the groundwork. What United Service needs, if it is to become a reality, is the active personal support of every individual citizen. That is a duty in which we all share -- in which, I know, we all are glad to share.

The United Service Organizations should and will have our united support -- in financial contributions and in personal effort. To facilitate their work throughout the country a national conference of community leaders, to be held in Washington, April 17, is being sponsored by Federal Security Administrator, Paul V. McNutt, with the cooperation of the Secretaries of War and of the Navy. I understand that invitations to several hundred Community leaders were wired yesterday.

I am certain that the American people will get behind this United Service program with characteristic whole-heartedness. I know of no enterprise more vital to the well-being of the millions of young people who are rallying to the country's call.

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CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #734,
Executive Offices of the White House,
April 11, 1941, 10.45 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: You people are becoming very popular. I am going to charge admission pretty soon. I have to pay some income tax -- so must charge admission to the audience so that they can see and hear you all. Think that is a good idea?

MR. GODWIN: I think it is a swell idea. I hope you charge them enough.

Q The question is who is on exhibit? (Laughter)

Q Comedy is it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, melodrama.

Q Each might bring you a souvenir.

Q If it's educational it's tax-free, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q If it's educational and charitable it's tax-free.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q If it's educational and charitable it's tax-free.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q How long do you contemplate being at Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the plans yet.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have enough to keep you busy for three or four hours. The first is the signing of the order this morning creating the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply, under the Office of Emergency Management, to be headed by Mr. Henderson (Mr. Leon Henderson). This has been worked out with the approval of O.P.M. It continues and emphasizes the protection of the consumer, and it provides for programs

to what we call residual supply of materials among the competing civilian demands -- I would say what we call consumer -- after the military requirements are satisfied. Steve (Mr. Early) will have copies of the order for you when Leon will have a press conference tomorrow, to explain any details. It -- among other things -- it merges the existing offices under the National Emergency Committee [National Defense Advisory Commission?] of Seven -- the old one -- it merges two of those offices and in effect puts them together using the staffs of those two offices. One is Mr. Henderson's office of Price Stabilization, and the other is Miss Elliott's (Miss Harriet Elliott) office of Consumer Protection -- puts those two together. Well, that means essentially that out of -- out of the original organization which of course was a temporary one -- to get things started -- out of those seven original offices, five have now been consolidated and it leaves only two out of the original seven -- the Agriculture Division and the Transportation Division -- which have not yet been consolidated into the larger picture; and those we are now studying exactly where they would fit in in the developed picture. In other words, whether they would come in under the Office of Emergency Management, or whether they would work in through other agencies of the Government.

Er -- In this Order there are a great many Statutes that are referred to. It is a technical matter, but if anything occurs to you on reading the Orders -- to what all these section references are -- Leon will have a -- I have them right here -- a statement or explanation of what the older Statutes are. I think that about covers it. I haven't -- I don't think there is any use in going into detail.

Q Would you give us about a paragraph on what the Office of Emergency Management is, who is on it, and what its function is?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, very simple -- when the Reorganization Act was put through, there were authorized several organizations under the Office of the President, because they did not fit in anywhere else. In other words, they referred to a good many different branches of the Government, such for example as the Office of the Budget. The Office of the Budget refers to all of the offices of the Government, Departments, Agencies and everything else. Beforehand it had been more or less under the Treasury, but of course that was not right because they have to pass on the Treasury estimates. So, they were made an independent Office in the Office of the President. Secondly, there was the National Resources Board, which of course again touches a great many different Departments, and then there was authorized at that time an emergency office in the Office of the President, not to be set up until and unless needed, and that was called the Office of Emergency Management. Now, under the Office of Emergency Management we set up the O.P.M., and now we are setting up this new organization; and there may be others, we can't tell.

Q Mr. President, when Mr. Henderson's organization arrives at a conclusion or determination as to a price or priority, will he have authority to enforce it? Is that made clear in the Orders?

THE PRESIDENT: As far as the laws go.

Q Is that included in these --

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how far does --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In other words, until you have read the Orders, I don't think there is any use talking about it.

Q Will Mr. Henderson continue on the S.E.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: As far as I know.

Q When and where are we going to have that Press Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q When and where are we going to have that Press Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: At his office, tomorrow morning.

MR. LEON HENDERSON: 11 o'clock; we will put it on the notice outside.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you seen the sections of the proposed murals for the new War Department Building. They have been delivered here presumably? Have you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I would like to see them very much. Is there any scandal about them? (Laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I haven't seen them either.

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Mr. President, a story has been printed again that Secretary Perkins has turned in her resignation. Is that true?

THE PRESIDENT: Just another story. It has been going on for eight years, so it's all right.

Q Mr. President, is there any question of transferring more destroyers to Britain at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Then, number two. Are you ready for number two? We are going to do a little jumping now.

I have signed the Act, or rather the Joint Resolution -- S. J. Resolution 7, affirming and approving non-recognition of the transfer of any geographic region in this hemisphere from one non-American power to another non-American power, and providing for consultation with other American republics, in the event that such transfers should appear likely. You are all familiar with that. It has been duly signed and is now a law.

You are familiar with the Danish agreement that was entered into. You know the reasons for it. You know the fact that Greenland is considered very definitely part of the Western Hemisphere and has the same status, both under the Monroe Doctrine and the various agreements that have been made by the American republics, as at other places, such as Martinique, Guadalupe, British Guiana, Trinidad, and so forth and so on. This Resolution of the Senate affirms that as the American policy.

Q Mr. President, does that imply that there is any consultation necessary with the American republics with respect to Greenland?

THE PRESIDENT: They all know about it.

Then, two proclamations, along the same general question of war. The first is the proclamation of a state of war between Germany and Italy on the one side and Yugoslavia on the other.

The other is the proclamation which revokes the combat area previously set forth and covering the mouth of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. At that time the original proclamation did not cover the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden in so many words, but it set up a small -- what you might call a "stopper" (he laughs a little) across the -- from the eastern-most tip of Africa to the Arabian coast. In other words, you could go into the Red Sea without going through that area, and that area has now been revoked as a combat area, in effect making the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea open to commerce like any other non-combat zone.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, may I ask will the ships be permitted to go up to the Suez Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: I just said that you have taken the "stopper" out.

Q Yes, yes, Well, then, they can go out?

THE PRESIDENT: I have just said they have taken the "stopper" out. (He laughs)

Q Is the Suez Canal now in a declared combat zone?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q No?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not the Canal itself.

Q Not the canal itself? Could you tell us whether or not the combat zone begins at the eastern Mediterranean there, at the beginning there?

THE PRESIDENT: It covers the Mediterranean.

Q Do you think, sir, that they could go as far as Port Said, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't got a large-scale map here. I don't think it is a very practical question. I think they could go --

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) through Ismalia.

Q I am not quite clear on the law. When that combat zone is revoked American ships can carry anything into the --?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What are the high seas? What are the high seas? The high seas are everything except things in the combat zone.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In other words, the high seas. What is Buenos Aires?

Q Mr. President, I think there has been some confusion as to whether or not an American ship, with this revocation of the former order, can carry war materials destined for a belligerent through that area.

THE PRESIDENT: No, not for a belligerent, but for a neutral power.

Q They can take it to Egypt, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, Phil Murray said, when he was here day before yesterday, that he would like to have you speak for both of them about his meeting with you. Can you tell us what it related to?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, a lot of things, that's all. No use going into details on that. The less said on labor disputes on the outside the quicker they are settled.

Q Getting back to the combat zone -- there was a story printed this morning that you may ask for an amendment in repeal of the statutory provisions of Halifax --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I read it with great interest. First time I had ever heard of it.

Q Is the United States taking any military measures to protect Greenland?

THE PRESIDENT: You saw what the War Department said yesterday. The War Department said that there would be no news or any details relating to any bases from now on. You will have to get accustomed to that. (He laughs)

Q Any word on the Ford strike, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I think my previous remarks apply -- the less said the quicker mended.

Q Mr. President, on this combat zone -- does it mean that American ships carrying goods to neutrals may traverse the Suez Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I just said it isn't really a practical question. The Suez Canal, in the first place is in Egypt, and the two ports -- I will have to teach you geography, Paul. (Mr. Paul Leach of Chicago Daily News) I will have to learn some geography myself.

The Port Said is, as I remember it, at the Mediterranean end, and

I think it is called Ismailia that is at the other end, and I think there is a railroad along the Canal between those two places. Now, I haven't the faintest idea as to whether a ship would go through the Canal in order to discharge at Port Said, or would go alongside of Ismailia, and the stuff go across the Isthmus by rail.

Q The Mediterranean would remain out of bounds?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. I am not fully familiar with geography to be able to tell you off-hand whether the individual dock at Port Said is in the Mediterranean, or whether it is in the Canal, (he laughs), you see. I don't know. Never been there.

Q Ismailia is in Egypt, is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q And that is a neutral country at which we can deliver supplies there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Under the Neutrality Act, sir, no supplies ultimately destined for any belligerent could be delivered to a neutral country for trans-shipment, could they?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That brings up other questions of international law. I would hesitate very much to say yes or no on that. You get things like a continuous voyage -- and if you will read John Bassett Moore's five volumes you will find the House has been on all four sides of that subject.

Q One is a good side then, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q One is a good side?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter)

Q Would that question be explored in connection with this new proclamation

opening up?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so -- we don't buy headaches unless we have to.

Q Mr. President, the Southern Governors report complete agreement, in view of the recommendation on industry. Would you comment, please?

THE PRESIDENT: They did report?

Q Reported complete agreement with you on the recommendation of plants and contracts.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, about all that could be said is this -- that they asked me whether I approved a statement. In other words, a policy that had been outlined by Army, Navy and O.P.M., which had been previously given out, and I said yes. Well, everybody was satisfied. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Army, Navy, O.P.M., the Governors and the President -- all satisfied. (he laughs)

Q Have you seen Arthur Salter yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am going to see him day before yesterday -- tomorrow.

Q If he puts up this proposition of Halifax, would you consider it?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say that was purely hypothetical, because I never heard of it until I read the paper this morning.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. (Mr. Godwin spoke rather softly).

Q Did you discuss the steel pact with Mr. Fairless and Mr. Olds yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Did I what?

Q Did you discuss the steel pact with Fairless or Olds?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, the Northwest air base operating an airline from the Pacific coast in Seattle has applied for a certificate east to New

York City, across a part of Canada and I believe that that application has been placed before you for a decision?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. The only thing I have got is an application for somebody to get an airline from Seattle up to Vancouver, that is all.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir, Mr. President. (Much louder voice this time) (They all laugh).

Q (To Mr. Godwin) You were being very polite.

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Press Conference #735,
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April 15, 1941, 4.05 P.M.

MR. GODWIN: Did you see that C.C.C. book? (handing book to the President)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, this is nice. It is a good piece of work.

Q What kind of reaction did you get from the country on your high pitch?

THE PRESIDENT: On my what?

Q What kind of reaction did you get from the country on your high pitch yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Good. Darn good. Yes. It had a very definite curve on it. I wasn't going to risk the lives of the photographers, so I made it high. (he laughs)

(The President here conferred briefly with Lauchlin Currie)

MR. GODWIN: Who is tickling me? (to lady reporter behind him)

SHE: Not me.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything except a little human interest thing that I saved out yesterday. In the first list of non-military equipment which the British Purchasing Commission wanted, I ran my eye down the list and suddenly it brought back something to me, when three of the items ---. I remember, once upon a time, I was talking about what people would do if their neighbor's house caught fire -- if they happened to have some garden hose in the cellar they would take it out and lend it to their neighbor to put his fire out. On this first list of -- there are a number of different items like tar, kettles, and road rollers, and pumps, and graders. The last three items are for 900,000 feet of garden hose! (laughter) Not garden hose but fire

hose -- actually fire hose -- at a total cost of about $300,000. I thought it was a rather nice little coincidence.

Q Mr. President, you said you were going to loan them to them at the time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, do you have any ocean-going fire hose?

THE PRESIDENT: We will have to get it over the ocean some way.

Q Mr. President, could you talk to us about the possibility of dropping the minimum age limit from 21 to 18, and the possibility of keeping troops in training longer than the one-year period?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we are working on it at the present time. We haven't anything yet. It was felt, I think, that both in the Committees of the House and also in the War Department it was better to get some idea a little bit later on. I don't know what dates Committees are set for hearings. I would say at a guess not until the end of May, the beginning of June, which will give plenty of time for any legislation to be enacted before, let us say, September. It is being studied.

This is entirely off-hand. Of course, literally nothing has been decided -- that after the first needs are filled, in the way of manpower in relation to the different grades and necessities of turning out an army, then we would come to a more regularized system with the age limit lowered and a certain number of years for people to give their one year of service to the Government of the United States. And of course, as you know, there is a certain amount of talk about everybody giving a year of service to the Government of the United States out of their life. It isn't a bad idea. I should think, as I remarked before, all of you, and I, would have been a lot better off today if we had given one year of service to the Government of the United States

from the time we were 18 until the early 20's. That is just general.

Q Yes. Now, about the other phase of it --
(interposing)
THE PRESIDENT:/ What?

Q About the other phase of it -- the possibility of one year not being effective to make a well-rounded soldier. Can you talk about that today?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that has been discussed yet.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, has the top age limit of 36 been discussed with the possibility --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, I think that covers it. In other words, after the present necessities are filled, that would mean taking some more people in their late 20's or early 30's, but that eventually it would be the -- the age limit could be reduced.

MR. GODWIN: My experience with the Local Draft Boards is that they seem to be hilarious over getting the top ages 35 to 36 -- if they could possibly not take them, they do. If they possibly cannot take them they won't take them.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes, their physical condition is not apt to be so good.

Q Isn't there another feature of that, and that is that you would have had an army of 20 to 21 year old men if your first registration had been on that basis, and now you have got the older men in it, or will have them in, and therefore wouldn't it be a top-heavy army?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not saying 21.

Q No, I know that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It might be reduced from 35. It will work out. After you get that through, get things actually going and adequate numbers of people in the first instance, then it carries itself along pretty well.

Q Mr. President, Dr. Hu Shih (Ambassador from China) gave the impression

today that there might be some announcement here this afternoon regarding the Far East.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. I had a visit this morning from the Chinese Ambassador and Dr. Soong, taking up various details. As you know, there has been nothing happening lately to change the general policy in regard to nations that -- against whom aggression is being continued, and that includes China, and the machinery is in existence, the list of needs have in part already been analyzed and already started to be processed, and we are continuing analyzing and will process other needs of all kinds.

Q What do you mean by processing, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, processed means one of two things: It means taking existing stuff and starting it over, or it means ordering new stuff.

Q Mr. President, have you seen or heard the reports that the Japanese have a lend-lease scheme of theirs?

THE PRESIDENT: They what?

Q Have a lend-lease scheme of theirs, that is, leased a lot of battleships to the Germans?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard it.

Q You had no report on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only news reports, and they don't always count. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you say anything about the North Atlantic air base expansion in Narragansett Bay? Senator Green indicated that it was under consideration yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: Under consideration? It is nearly finished. (laughter)

Q He indicated that there was something beyond the naval air station, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, oh -- I know. That is the question I wanted to talk

about -- the possibility of providing additional shipping facilities -- discussing things of that kind at some point in Narragansett Bay for over-seas shipments, and I am getting a report on it. It is a question largely of location, or deep enough water, how much water there is in the channel to various places in the bay; Providence, Bristol and the top end of Rhode Island, and also the question of adequacy of docks, because it is a high, free port and it is pretty handy. It is in the center of a very large manufacturing center of the country and it may be advisable to work out something in the way of better shipping facilities. I don't know.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Excuse me (to the gentleman who asked the previous question) I thought you were thinking of Quonset Point. That is very nearly finished.

Q How extensive --

Q (interposing) Do you plan to dedicate Quonset Point?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that I would call it dedicating, any more than I dedicated the Jacksonville base.

Q How extensive will Harry Hopkins' power be in his new job?

THE PRESIDENT: I hate beginning to define, any more than it was defined before. I would say that they would be powers -- I wouldn't say powers -- I think that his greatest duty is to carry out the task assigned.

Q Mr. President, the press reports from Europe indicate that the situation looks rather gloomy for the British at the moment.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they?

Q Would you care to comment?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. No. I don't look that way, do I? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you expect --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I hope that is a good enough answer.

Q Do you expect, sir, an early resumption of coal mining?

THE PRESIDENT: Do I expect what?

Q Do you expect an early resumption of coal mining?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Mr. President, now that the S.W.O.C. and Big Steel have reached an agreement on wages, can you tell us what went on last week in your conference with Mr. Murray, and Olds and Fairless?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think I told you what they were.

Q Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I told you at the time, didn't I? Yes, we had a Press Conference since then. I don't think there is anything new to add.

Q The situation has changed since then.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q An agreement has been reached --
(interposing)
THE PRESIDENT:/ The conference didn't change.

Q What I am getting at is this: Did you have something to do with bringing about that agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. I never have anything to do with that. (loud laughter) (The President enjoyed his answer)

Q In their talks with you, did Mr. Olds and Mr. Fairless intimate that if they raised wages they might have to raise prices?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. We talked about all kinds of technical things, as to the amount of molybdenum that was needed for a ton of steel, and things like that. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Carborundum, for instance. (more laughter)

Q Talk about escalator clauses?

THE PRESIDENT: Only escalators where they are needed to get people from one floor up. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr, President, the restoration of Wilson's birthplace made formal May 4. I have heard stories that you were going down there. Do you know anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: It's just one of those things -- lots of things I would like to do. I would like to go to that.

Q Are you going to Warm Springs, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I was afraid somebody was going to ask that question (He laughs). It will come out anyway -- Walter Winchell will break it. What happened is -- it's one on me. What happened was that I had hoped to leave last night for Warm Springs, but about last Thursday they had a rather violent outbreak of German measles down there. I didn't mind particularly. I have had German measles. I don't know whether you can get it again, but of course I have quite a number of members of the press following me around, and I was thinking about their fate, so -- (laughter) I had given the trip up until the thing had died down, and then somebody said, well, you would have to do it anyway, because if the President should come down with German measles at this time -- (this brought the house down with laughter). It would be subject to a radio broadcast. So, I still hope to get off, but it does depend on what happens down there.

Q Twenty years ago that was called "Liberty Measles." (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I remember it in 1917 -- there was quite an outbreak, and we called it "Hun Pox". (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, will Mr. Hopkins be a dollar-a-year man?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he will not. (he laughs)

Q Will he be an Administrative Assistant then, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't know what he will be, but he won't be a dollar-a-year man.

HCB 9-24-36

Q Will he get paid? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sure. He's a Democrat! What a foolish question. (this brought the house down again with laughter)

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That was what I said to Phil Knudsen, the other day. In about the fourth or fifth list of these dollar-a-year men, they were all listed as Republicans except a boy who had graduated from Yale last June and never voted, and I said, "Bill, couldn't you find a Democrat to go on this dollar-a-year list anywhere in the country?" (laughter). He said, "I have searched the whole country over. There's no Democrat rich enough to take a job at a dollar a year. (more laughter) [Bill]

Q Mr. President, can you tell us -- do you expect to meet MacKenzie King of Canada in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: He is coming down here for a holiday very soon, and I hope to see him, but where, of course, I don't know, because I don't know where I will be, or where he will be. Just before he goes back I hope to see him.

Q Is it the policy of this Government to protect American merchant ships wherever they go, as long as they are not in combat zones?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is it part of the policy of this Government to protect merchant ships -- our merchant ships -- wherever they go, as long as they are not in a combat zone?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is the law, you know.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is not a question of policy, it is the law.

Q Have any of the commodities shipped abroad to aid the Democracies under the terms of the Lease-Lend Bill been sunk?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, could you tell whether you feel there is an increasing demand toward the use of American naval power?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I couldn't tell you that.

Q Mr. President, is there any agreement --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I would also -- let me put it this way -- there has been more nonsense written, more printer's ink spoiled, more oratory orated over that subject by people who don't know a 'hill of beans' about it than any other subject in modern times. I know a little bit more about it -- not an awful lot -- but I know so little that I wouldn't care to discuss the thing from the point of view of 'if that' or 'if the other' thing. That is just a word of suggestion. Most people have no idea about the subject of protection of shipping.

Q Mr. President, your answer to the question about the protection of ships wherever they go, if they are not in combat zones, leaves the impression that if our ships go through the Red Sea we will protect them there.

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I don't know of ships (American) that are in the Red Sea.

Q You know of ships going there pretty soon?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Sir, there has been some talk of the possibility of arming our merchant ships. Is that under consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only by orators.

Q Isn't that prohibited under the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Isn't arming prohibited under the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I think it is. Anyway, as I have said, it has never been discussed except by orators.

Q Is there any thing more about taking Halifax out of the combat zone?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would you care to comment on the Danish Minister's decision to disregard the order for his recall?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I can give you a little historical background on that. You see it has been perfectly clear to anybody who has ever analyzed it -- as far as I know practically all writers or people who had anything to do with the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine -- way back -- that there was recognition at that time of the sovereignty of certain European nations over territory in the Western Hemisphere, but at the same time a general interpretation of the Doctrine that that sovereignty could not be transferred, that it might be against the interests of the Republics of this hemisphere if they were transferred from one European nation to another. There were several instances where it was attempted, with the general disapproval of the American Republics, and there was one instance, of course, where a European army did come to this continent when we were somewhat busy with other matters, and as soon as the Civil War was over, the European army withdrew.

In the case of Danish possessions, there were principally two of them, one was what used to be called the Danish West Indies, colonized in large part by Danes, and the other was Greenland, which again had been colonized in large part by Scandinavians. They had a civiliza-

tion up there, as you know, which started at the time of Lief Erickson. They had a Christian people up there. They had a cathedral, I think, and quite an influx of immigrants into Greenland that came from Norway and Denmark, which during at least part of that time were in the same kingdom under the same king.

At all times, through all the centuries, Denmark was, you might say, the Father -- the sponsor -- of those colonists in Greenland. And during the past century, for instance, they have done a great deal to help the colonists and the natives -- the Eskimos. They have seen to it that they improved agriculture. They have helped them on mineral surveys and on actual mining, and they have seen to it that they had enough food to last them through bad winters. They have sent ice-breakers there early in the year, and a few years ago a question did come up involving, you might say, the old question of the right of sovereignty as gained on one hand by colonization, on the other hand by exploration. The United States had a claim by exploration to a large part of Northern Greenland. That of course was disputed by other countries which had sent explorers up there -- earlier explorations by the British. And as an example, some explorations by Norwegians, and the thing came to a head because there was a lot of rather wild claims about Greenland.

Denmark, however, had the only claim to Greenland through the process of colonization. This country (U.S.A.) said quite rightly, "That is a better title than mere exploration, and we therefore are going to recognize your sovereignty over Greenland because of colonization, and the fact that colonization has been going on for about 900 years -- way back in the days of Lief Erickson. Long before Columbus. It seems

to be the just thing to do." Therefore, it was recognized by us, thereby officially putting Greenland in exactly the same status as Martinique, British West Indies, Guadalupe, Curacao and the Dutch West Indies, and the same status which had previously been held up in 1917 by the Danish West Indies which at that time -- January, 1917 -- we purchased. Therefore, clearly, Greenland fell within the interpretation, and the historic treatment that had been accorded to other European sovereignties -- territories -- in this hemisphere.

Now, on the recent thing, that being perfectly clear, you have to go back to a year ago last 9th of April, when the government of Denmark was overthrown by surprise, and Denmark was occupied by a large number of troops of another European nation. From the very beginning the Ministry of Denmark here, as you know, and the State Department, held that most unfortunately the government -- the existing government of Denmark -- was a government under duress, (that has been held by us for over a year), and that during war it was impossible to regard the government of Denmark as a government not under duress. It was under duress as a matter of actual fact. That being so, we are applying to Denmark (The President said Greenmark) it might be called a carrying out of the Monroe Doctrine, which of course has been reinforced by the conferences at Lima and Panama, and Havana, and we are protecting Greenland against any other European nation, and will continue to do so, and trusting that as soon as the duress is lifted from the government and people of Denmark, Greenland will be restored to an independent Denmark. That is about all.

Q Mr. President, does the visit of, or as a result of MacKenzie Kings' visit here -- is there any possibility of your repaying that visit to

Canada this summer?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

MR. GODWIN: If I can go back into your background, wasn't it the episode of the French army under Maximilian, and we ran them out, as I recall?

THE PRESIDENT: Physically not, but we had a very large army under a fellow named Sherman! (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

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At the Executive Offices of the White House,
April 18, 1941, 10.45 A.M.

(Three House Guests of the President were present at this Conference.

They were: Mr. and Mrs. Hancock Griffin, and their daughter Katherine).

THE PRESIDENT: I wonder -- how do you think the Poughkeepsie golf course looks? How is the ground?

Q Pretty well dried out.

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe you will get a chance to use it -- I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: The 19th hole, the 19th hole -- (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any particular news. Over the week end I will probably take action on an Executive Order on a matter of ultimate importance, and that is the Executive Order putting into effect the Ramspeck Bill, which covers into the classified service a very large number of people who hitherto have been exempt, but I have not finished going over it yet, so I think we might as well hold it to give the people on the train, or at Hyde Park, something to do over the week end. (laughter) They never have any stories up there, so I am holding it for that purpose.

MR. GODWIN: When would that become effective, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a technical question. Practically, it will become effective about the end of June -- first of July -- actually it will become effective the first of January. Now that sounds funny, but -- in other words, you have to have six months, do you see. People that come in after the 30th of June are not eligible for the January appointment, so practically it goes into effect first of July. Of course,

it will take some time to get all these lists gone through and the classification of the people who take examinations.

Q Mr. President, has any material, or any material form of aid actually started on its way to China?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I would have to ask Mr. Currie.

Q Have specific authorizations been made, sir, for such material aid?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q In connection with China, sir, we understand that there is a meeting on in Singapore this morning with diplomatic and naval representatives of this country, Great Britain, Australia and the Dutch East Indies?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't yet heard.

Q Not yet heard?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have we engaged in any consultations on general policy of the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: I think since 1810. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, Mary McCauley of Newport, R. I., said that you would be up there again June 22. Have you anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: New one on me. Making up my schedule for me. I haven't. I can't look ahead like that.

Q Do you have any comment on the possible danger of harmful draft rumors because of insufficient draft publicity?

THE PRESIDENT: What is that? What is that? Read it again. (jokingly)

Q Do you have any comment on the possible danger of harmful draft rumors because of insufficient publicity? What I mean is -- (laughter) I am referring specifically to such kind -- as to Senator Smith's son, in regard to his deferment?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can make any comment on any specific cases.

I don't think it will be a fair thing.

Q Mr. President, can you give us any idea of how that 3½ billion dollars of new taxes can or ought to be raised?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, oh -- it will be --

Q (interposing) Yes, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. That is what the Committee has begun to work on. It will take them a couple of months.

Q Mr. President, would you comment, sir, on your feeling now about a general sales tax, or payroll tax?

THE PRESIDENT: Just the same as I have always felt. (jokingly)

Q That you don't particularly care for it?

THE PRESIDENT: Not very much, no. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you any general thought on the progress of the war in Europe?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you feel that --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, you see, you haven't greased the palm of the Delphic oracle sufficiently for me to answer that question. (laughter)

Q Would you care to say whether you feel that American opinion is adequately aware of the present acuteness of the war?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say, in answer to that, no, that it is not, but becoming increasingly so.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Increasingly aware.

Q Mr. President, how could you increase that awareness?

THE PRESIDENT: Mm -- General American intelligence -- mental processes, based on information and thought -- cracker-barrel conversations, National Press Club conversations (some laughter), and so forth and so on.

Q Do you feel, sir, that these reverses in Greece have increased the danger to this country?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think that that is the kind of a question that should be either asked or answered.

Q Mr. President, the motor car manufacturers have agreed to decrease production by 20% into next year. Is that the forerunner of other curtailments in consumer goods?

THE PRESIDENT: I ain't no seer. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether you have received Senator Tobey's (Senator Charles W. Tobey of New Hampshire, Republican) telegram?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't, but Steve (Mr. Early) has. (laughter) Steve told me about three minutes ago that the telegram had come in, just before the Press Conference, and he had referred it to the Navy Department. I haven't seen it.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us something about your talk with MacKenzie King?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we were talking about German measles. (laughter) I am going to see him next week, somewhere. We don't know where. We didn't talk about anything else.

Q Did you mention what you plan to take up next week?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you seen Sir Arthur Salter yet?

(The President didn't answer this question, probably not hearing)

THE PRESIDENT: We had a very short talk over a cup of tea, and that is all

that happened. We didn't take up anything of any importance at all.

Q No Halifax?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to make a tax statement to the public sometime soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I expect so, sometime.

Q Could you give any idea as to how or when?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't decided. You will know it when it is given.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment to make on Mr. Henderson's action in freezing steel prices?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh --

Q (interposing) You approve of that? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you still plan extension of the Social Security and Old Age Pensions?

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Altmeyer (Arthur J. Altmeyer, Chairman of the Social Security Board) is coming in today to lunch with me, to talk about it.

Q Did you see Mr. Altmeyer yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I had to leave him out because I got behind in my schedule.

Q Mr. President, have you any word as to the extent of the coal shortage resulting from the three weeks' shutdown?

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- No. Nothing except the general thing that it has not yet seriously affected the defense program.

Q Do you plan any action to end that shutdown soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope that there will be some mines running next Monday. That is all I can say.

Q Mine or mines?

THE PRESIDENT: Mines.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment to make on the War Department's announcement yesterday of a plan establishing a civilian observation corps for protection against aviation attack?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is a thing, of course, that has been tried out and worked pretty well, and this plan of theirs is to do the same thing all over the country that was done in a very limited area last fall. Those of you who were up to those maneuvers of about a hundred thousand in Northern New York -- I think they probably told you at the time. We were there before this actual mimic attack took place but they had organized certain communities all around the area clear down to the Mohawk on the south, and clear over beyond Lake Champlain on the east. Through various existing organizations, principally the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, they set up a system of watchers against planes in all these communities. Well, when the attack actually began in this mimic battle, they began getting from the outskirts of this area immediate reports from the civilian population. The area that was passed over by the attacking planes would get notice to the defending army up there -- what direction they were coming from, how many there were, etc., which was purely civilian effort, and it worked awfully well. The Army is very much pleased. This is an organizing of the -- I suppose greater part of our country along similar lines.

Q Mr. President, is there an actual danger of air attack on this country?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there an actual danger of an air attack on this country?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know just as much about that as I do.

Q Mr. President, do you know when tanks will be available for export?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you, I don't know. The light tanks, I think, are actually being delivered now.

Q Mr. President, one last question, or comment -- the Southern Operators claim that they have a freight rate differential against them which makes it necessary to have a lower wage rate. That seems to imply that the I.C.C. (Interstate Commerce Commission) might do something toward alleviating the situation? Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that the I.C.C. is looking into it, and also that the Bituminous Coal Bureau has a lot of figures on the actual costs of the Southern Coal area on production.

Q Can you give us any background as to why that freight rate differential is in there?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know that has been a burning question now all through the South for a great many years, and it is felt that there was discrimination in many of the present rates, and I have agreed with them. I don't know any specific rate. I could give you the information now, but there are a great many things where the South is discriminated against under the present rates.

Q How long would it take -- is it necessarily a long process to get the freight rate change made by the I.C.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Too bad.

Q Would you comment, sir, then, upon the Operators' insistence upon a differential?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it all depends on how you read figures. Some people say that they don't need the differential to show all the profits that they have made, and others say they do.

Q Mr. President, the Rome radio said last night that you were appointing a new ambassador to the Vatican. Is that true?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #737,
Executive Offices of the White House,
April 22, 1941, 4.09 P.M.

Q Is that all news? (indicating papers on the top of the President's desk)

THE PRESIDENT: No, only the top there. I have very little news. I don't have much; I haven't got over Sunday yet.

Q What is your best day?

Q Wednesday?

THE PRESIDENT: Friday. I'll hand you out some fish and ham. (he laughs)

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Godwin) How is your boy getting on?

MR. GODWIN: All right.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (turning around to find Mr. Early behind him) how can you have a three-day conference on May 26th?

MR. EARLY: (indicating on the sheet the President was holding) Beginning -- Look, sir, (indicating) 26 - 27 - 28.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh -- all right, all right. (the President laughs)

Q (to the President) He has to check up on you.

Q Poor copy reading. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I had better read it over first.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am calling a National Conference on Nutrition, May 26, 27, and 28, in Washington. I have a suggested press release, which I am not going to bother you with. I will give you the high spots.

Nutrition is an important part of the defense program. While we have an abundance of food, there is still a nutrition problem, because many people are not receiving the kind of food they require for full

physical and mental vigor. Recent scientific advances have been so great that it is time to put the knowledge of them into practice. It is especially important that we eliminate all diseases due to malnutrition from workers in the defense industries, boys in the training camps, and to give to each household in the country the opportunity of seeing that the family is properly fed, with special attention to the needs of children. And as this memorandum suggests, we should put in part into effect the lessons that we have learned from running training tables for athletic teams.

This Conference will be under the direction of Mr. McNutt (Paul V. McNutt, Administrator, Federal Security Agency). That is a lot better than a formal statement.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, when you have had that Conference, what is the -- what comes out of it, knowledge only, or is there --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hope practice.

MR. GODWIN: As far as what is concerned?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the Government has soldiers. -- For instance, the -- if the Government had any control or even influence over you or me, they would watch our diet, and be very good to you and me. But it would help -- it might even help you and me.

VOICE FROM THE REAR: Louder please. (the President laughs)

Q What types of people are covered, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got a list here.

Q Mr. President, to get on a local subject, could you tell us anything about Mayor LaGuardia's visit?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, just continuing our talks on coordination of certain aspects of home defense, of which he is the Chairman of the Council

of Mayors, and whom he has been working with for some time.

Q Have you asked him, sir, to take the Directorship of that yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Do you expect to ask him, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't know that there will be one, (he laughs) so I wouldn't do any guessing. You are sure to be wrong.

Q Is there something to guess about? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, there is nothing to guess about.

Q Mr. President, Lyndon Johnson (Lyndon B. Johnson, Congressman from Texas, Democrat) just announced he is a candidate for the Senate in Texas. Could you make any comment on that, or on Mr. Johnson?

THE PRESIDENT: He told me, too. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) He must have told you a few minutes ago.

THE PRESIDENT: He did -- just one minute before he told you.

MR. GODWIN: He didn't tell me. Well, you know that -- you don't mingle in these State primaries, but I would like to ask you if you look with favor upon Mr. Johnson?

THE PRESIDENT: Wouldn't that be mingling if I said yes or no? Have you stopped beating your wife, yes or no? (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: She's away. (laughter) (after a short pause) That's the answer to that. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) As a matter of fact, of course, it is perfectly obvious you can't make any -- you can't write any story that gives the wrong impression or the wrong facts about this. The Texas papers will be for or against any one of a great many -- good many

candidates. Now it is up to the State of Texas to elect their own Senator, that is number one. Number two, I can't take part in a Texas primary. Number three, if you ask me about Lyndon himself, I can't take part in his election. I can only say what is perfectly true, -- you all know he is a very old and close friend of mine. Now that's about all. Now don't try to tie those things together! (the President brought the house down with laughter) (He adds): And print them all instead of just one separately! (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: That's it. That's all right.

Q How many other Texas candidates are there?

THE PRESIDENT: This is not a comparative meeting. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, last week, Secretary Knox said the Navy is considering spending large sums of money to expand its facilities in Narragansett Bay. Can you give us any details on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I never heard of it.

Q Could you say anything about that report of Senator Green's on expanding ship facilities?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no report on it.

Q He says he sent it last week, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: No report, probably sent it down the line.

Q Mr. President, a press dispatch from London today said that the British are becoming concerned over public opinion in this country concerning the war. Would you care to comment on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. That's a press report. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, could you say anything of whether British reverses in the Balkans would have any effect on the amount of shipments of materials we will send to Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't live at Delphi.

Q Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't live at Delphi.

VOICE IN THE REAR: You're lucky. (the President laughs)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us about your conversation with Mr. Kaiser today and his --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I never met him. He was brought in. He has a lot of work out there on the aluminum, and I think steel and magnesium. I have heard a great deal about it because he helped build the Boulder Dam and the Grand Coulee Dam, but I never met him before.

Q Did he mention steel expansion?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, everything to do with more materials for the West Coast.

Q Could you tell us what your reaction was?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't like the word.

Q Sorry. (the President laughs)

Q Mr. President, Mr. Kaiser said, when he came out, that he had complained about the difficulty of obtaining sufficient steel to build on the West Coast.

THE PRESIDENT: Ship plants and things like that.

Q If not steel for building those plants, he said he would ask you to do something about that. Are you going to?

THE PRESIDENT: I sent him to the people who have charge of priorities of steel.

Q Senator Taft has challenged the right of Mr. Henderson (Leon Henderson, Administrator of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply) to fix prices of steel -- he challenged the legality of it, to fix prices. Do you have anything to say on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. (laughter)

Q Another thing in this price thing, Mr. President, we receive reports from different newspapers about housewives complaining of the steady rise in the cost of food, vegetables, and steadily increasing rents --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Where? Where?

Q In Cincinnati, Cleveland. My own wife, for instance, says they are going up here.

THE PRESIDENT: What is going up here?

Q Prices.

THE PRESIDENT: What prices?

Q All kinds -- meats, the kind of things that all of us eat.

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but we have got to be specific on those things.

Q Well, I mean if there is a general rise in certain commodities when Mr. Henderson said that -- they would take that up later on, but in view of the new tax bill it seems to me that the steady rise in the cost --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You have got to have something behind a generalism. You have got to have some evidence, something that is going up, and where.

Q Do you have any indications?

THE PRESIDENT: Some things. In some localities things are too high.

Q Is there any way of combating that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we are going after it all the time. They have knocked a lot of prices down already on individual things in individual localities. Sometimes it is the fault of the grocer. Sometimes it is the people who all rush to buy, because they think there is going to be a shortage -- panic buying. Sometimes it has been corrected, where the thing was out of line with other communities, but I wouldn't call it --

I don't call it a strike, but they fail to buy the things for a little while, and then something happens to the price. It goes down, but we can't generalize on that. You have got to be specific in cases and places.

Q How about sugar, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, where and what? What price?

Q The East Coast refinery.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q There have been complaints about the price of sugar in the East Coast refinery.

THE PRESIDENT: What have they gone up to?

Q You've got me. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What a --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In other words, that is one of our troubles. We just plain generalize. Now, we have got to have specifications.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, I can give you a little specification.

THE PRESIDENT: Good, I know just what I will do with you.

MISS MAY CRAIG: In the last month a report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on a visit of 51 cities on general food prices showed that from the middle of March last year to the middle of March this year there had been increases in pork chops, steak, chickens, round-steak, ranging from 12 to 18%.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) will you arrange to have May go and see Miss Elliott (Miss Harriet Elliott, Division of Consumer Protection of the Council of National Defense) right away after the conference. (Laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: I was just helping Otto. (Otto Janssen, United Press Associations) (?) (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, there is -- there is a specific instance which may be taken over by Congress -- the alleged rise in the cost of rents and rooms in Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: You are right, and the hearing is up.

Q Is that a matter which you are interested in?

THE PRESIDENT: The Housing Commission is supposed to have all kinds of data on that. Now I will give you just an illustration of how -- what shall I say -- how really stupid it is to generalize when we don't know. And none of you know, and I don't know.

The other day I had two people come in, one right after the other, without any arrangement. It just so happened. One was a citizen of the District, who was very much concerned over the increase in rent to these new people that are coming down to work in Washington. The next was a Congressman, and I told him about this, and he said, "That is perfect nonsense. I have got a new secretary and she had no difficulty in finding a perfectly nice room at a reasonable rental, and at the older rental that my previous secretary had paid." Now, which was right, the first person or the second person? None of you know, and I don't know.

Go to the people who have got the facts on it.

Q Well, that is what --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The Housing people are supposed to have the facts on it. Maybe they are wrong.

MR. GODWIN: I think that they are both right, and I think that the secretary probably got a rent -- or a good room at a good rent. It is also true

that a good many are paying too much and living in rather congested quarters.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Well, of course, as you know, the survey did show the need for additional buildings. Now the additional buildings, I think, are being put up. Whether they are being put up in sufficient numbers is a thing that further survey, constant checking, alone can determine.

MR. GODWIN: Well, you were here during the World War and you remember exactly what happened, and they cured, or I think they cured it by a Rent Commission.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Now we may have to come to that. Perfectly possible. We may have to come to that, but I haven't had a recommendation for it. I do know that they are studying it.

Q Mr. President, anything on the plan for expansion of the food stamp plan?

THE PRESIDENT: That I couldn't tell you. I haven't heard a word.

Q Mr. President, will you say what has happened to the defense highway report, please?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh -- I think -- I think I have sent it to somebody for a recommendation, and I couldn't tell you -- I thought I had sent it to the National Resources Planning Board, but I think that I had already sent it there, and I think it has gone somewhere else now.

Q Would it go to the Budget, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, do you believe that the nation will be able to absorb the 3½ billions tax bill without injury to the consumer purchasing power?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say it depends a little bit whether the nation wanted to do everything that it could for the defense of the nation, and the

future of the nation or not.

Of course it can. It won't ruin the economic system.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of course it won't, but it depends largely on the desire of the nation to borrow a little bit less and pay a little bit more, and I think they are perfectly willing to.

Q Mr. President, would it be a defense secret to disclose any American ships delivering supplies through the Red Sea?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it would.

Q Mr. President, have you heard any reports from observers now in London, for instance General Arnold, on the situation in Europe on which you could comment?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course there are so many reports that are coming in all the time it is awfully difficult to know what should be made public and what shouldn't. Some are true one day and some -- they are not the next. I think we should realize -- I think the only thing we should realize is this, that, let us say, the reading public, radio-listening public in this country -- if they read history, they ought not to go up on a pinnacle of hope one day because of a sea battle off Italy, and go down to the depths of despair the next day because of an Axis advance in Greece. The obvious thing that people are becoming, I think, to realize more and more, is that this war won't be won by one sea fight, or one retreat in Greece, or even the Eastern Mediterranean. It will only be won by keeping the existence of the main defense of the Democracies going -- and that is England -- the British Empire.

Q Mr. President, is there any information that could be given about the amounts of loss of war materials on the way to England?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't anything. I haven't anything.

Q Mr. President, do you feel confident that the defenses of England will be kept going?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, that statement implies, in answer to the one I asked before, that there will be no diminution of materials to Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: It certainly won't.

Q Mr. President, have matters yet got to the point where it looks as though convoys would have to be seriously considered?

THE PRESIDENT: I never lived at Delphi.

Q Mr. President, aside from the question of convoys, have any steps been taken to insure the passage of material and supplies to England, that is, some measure of protection for this so called Bridge of Ships?

THE PRESIDENT: That is too glittering a question.

Q Would you care to comment on the relationship with the defense of England to the rail from Egypt to Dakar?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am not an amateur strategist.

Q Have you any information indicating that the Germans are moving over to the West Coast of Africa?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Somebody knocked over some of the President's novelties on his desk, to the amusement of the President and others)

Q Mr. President, may I ask one last question, to clear up something for

the rest of the boys? In your talks with MacKenzie King, did you take up the St. Lawrence?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Anything new?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Something about the legislation you were going to send up?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not ready on that yet.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #738,
Executive Offices of the White House,
April 25, 1941, 10.45 A.M.

MR. GODWIN: Old men have to sit down. (he sits down) Fat old men have to sit down.

Q And how!

THE PRESIDENT: Where's Fred? (Fred Essary)

MR. GODWIN: Haven't seen him.

THE PRESIDENT: Away? Is he on vacation or something, or what? (He laughs)

THE PRESIDENT: That's an interesting thing there. (survey marker) That's a new marker they put on a concrete thing for their surveys.

MR. GODWIN: That's a little bit better.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's better, don't you?

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: It's less clumsy.

MR. GODWIN: Did you ever run across those things?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we still find them occasionally.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, I found them up around the George Washington National Forest.

THE PRESIDENT: I wonder if Steve (Mr. Early) has anything for me. (turning around to find Mr. Early behind him) Got anything? (Mr. Early's reply indicated no)

Q Quiz program?

Q Double or nothing? (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) says there isn't anything -- any formality, or anything to be -- to talk about today. (there was a short pause here)

Q Mr. President, three strong speeches were made yesterday by three cabinet

officers --
(interposing)
THE PRESIDENT: /Three? (jokingly)

Q Yes, Secretary Hull, Secretary Knox and Secretary Wickard.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, is that so?

Q (continuing) About possible advances in foreign policy, and greater aid and more initiative, etc. Would you comment, sir, on this?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they speak for themselves pretty clearly, and for the great majority of the American people.

Q And also for you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Would you mind having him (the reporter) repeat that, sir?

(the reporter started to read back the President's previous answer)

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Just a minute, we're finishing something here.

(reporter read back "I think they speak for themselves pretty clearly, and for the great majority of the American people.")

Q Mr. President, the newspapers this morning generally seem to regard these speeches as indicating that it may soon be necessary to resort to an extended use of the Navy in protecting the Bridge of Ships. Would you consider that a fair interpretation of the speeches?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that we had better talk about interpretations. I think we had better confine ourselves to facts, and I am sorry, but I have to make a liar out of a lot of people -- some of them in this room. What -- I will tell you how.

In September, 1939, about a year and a half ago, the whole subject of hemisphere defense came up, as we know. And at that time, because of the conditions surrounding the outbreak of the war -- in other words, a

complete failure to adhere to international law, a surprise invasion, which was followed by other surprise attacks on peaceful nations -- at that time there was instituted by the western hemisphere what is known as a patrol, and that patrol extended on all sides of the hemisphere as necessary at the time. Of course, nobody here knows geography. People said it was 300 miles off-shore. Off what? -- it wasn't. It was a patrol that was carried out partly by the American Navy, partly by other American ships, off what was then considered a reasonable limit, depending on where it was. A lot of very careless people called it 300 miles. If you went over to the eastern shore of Maryland, you would have found for the past year and a half that that patrol was extended a thousand miles out to sea at that point. It was maintained as a patrol for such distances as seemed advisable, in view of the conditions at the time. That patrol has been extended from time to time in different places. Some places it has been pulled in, depending entirely on the conditions and the locations on any given duty, for a year and a half. That was a patrol. It was not a convoy.

I think some of you know what a horse looks like. I think you also know what a cow looks like. If, by calling a cow a horse for a year and a half you think that that makes the cow a horse, I don't think so. Now, that's pretty plain language. You can't turn a cow into a horse by calling it something else; calling it a horse it is still a cow. Now this is a patrol, and has been a patrol for a year and a half, still is, and from time to time it has been extended, and is being extended, and will be extended -- the patrol -- for the safety of the western hemisphere.

Q Could you tell us, sir, how far it may possibly go?

THE PRESIDENT: That is exactly the question I hoped you would ask. (he

laughs) As far on the waters of the seven seas as may be necessary for the defense of the American hemisphere.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Will there be any extension of its functions?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Could you define its functions?

THE PRESIDENT: Its function is protection of the American hemisphere.

Q By belligerent means?

THE PRESIDENT: Protection of the American hemisphere.

Q Mr. President, does that include the protection of shipping, that is --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Protection of the American hemisphere.

Q Mr. President, just what --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now you can't --. Just what? What do you mean, just what?

(the answer was not forthcoming)

THE PRESIDENT: The point of it -- is the -- is the protection of the American hemisphere, and will be so used as it has been for the past year and a half. Now I can't tell you what is going to happen.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us the difference between a patrol and a convoy?

THE PRESIDENT: You know the difference between a cow and a horse?

Q Yes, I know the difference.

THE PRESIDENT: All right, there is just as much difference, Jim. (Jim Wright, Buffalo Evening News) Just exactly as much difference.

Q Is there more patrolling against --

THE PRESIDENT: The point is the protection of the merchant convoy. The escorting of merchant ships in a group to prevent an act of aggression against that group of merchant ships under escort. A patrol is a

reconnaissance -- I think that is the word -- of certain areas of ocean to find out whether there is any possibly aggressive ship within that area, or areas, or the whole of the ocean, which might be coming toward the western hemisphere, or into the western hemisphere.

Now one thing that will occur to you as being, just as you say, a rule of common sense -- back there in 1939 the area of the patrol on the Atlantic was nearer, because there didn't seem to be any danger of an attack on places like Bermuda or Newfoundland, or Greenland, or Trinidad, or Brazil. The events, however, in the later period of the war show that such attack is more possible today than it was then. We have, incidentally, some rather valuable American lives and American property at various points that we didn't have in 1939. Again Greenland, Newfoundland, Bermuda -- all agreeing in between -- Newfoundland, Bermuda, is the obligation that we have under the Monroe Doctrine for the protection of Canada against any other non-American nation. That's old stuff. Then you have got other islands, the Bahamas, Antigua, and all the West Indies, Trinidad, British Guiana, which were not an American possession a year and a half ago. Today they are. Those bases, those points --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It's a little bit like I was talking to one of the Senators over the telephone today. He happened to come from the West, and it's rather a good -- rather a good simile. In the old days a wagon train across the plains -- of course it had its immediate guard around it, that was perfectly true, -- but it didn't go -- it didn't move across the plains unless it got reports from a long ways -- 200 to 300 miles off. It was not felt safe to wait until the Indians got two

miles away before you saw them. It was advisable, if possible, to find out if the Indians were 200 miles away.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think the simile probably is a useful one. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, if this patrol should discover some apparently aggressive ships headed toward the western hemisphere, what would it do about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me know. (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, has this Government any idea of escorting convoys?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, and that, I am afraid, will be awfully bad news to some of you.

Q Is there any better plan?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Has it any better system?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you remember Mr. Bairnsfather. (English cartoonist in World war I, who made the celebrated cartoon character Old Bill say to his worried friend in a shell-hole, "If you know a better 'ole, go to it.")

Q Mr. President, to some of us who read those speeches of the Cabinet officers, they seem to be concerned about the delivery of aid to Britain. How does this tie in with that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, it's a new one on me.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Well, Mr. President, won't we have a nice, safe sea route from here to Greenland?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope it will be safe up in those waters. I hope there won't be any further act of aggression. I am not at all certain that Greenland is not in part occupied by the Axis at the present moment. I don't say that it is. That is surprising, isn't it?

Q Occupied in part, did you say?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You said, I hope there will be no further act of aggression?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Were you speaking of Greenland, particularly at that point?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Specifically?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Could you tell us, sir, in what manner Greenland is occupied at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Fifth columnists, or something like that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, is this designed to accomplish the same thing that convoys would accomplish, or more effectively than they could accomplish it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Isn't it a bigger problem getting the shipment across when it gets over toward the other side?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no.

Q Mr. Secretary, could you tell us -- (loud laughter) could you tell us whether these patrol ships have any instructions as to the action they should take, in the event there was an attack in nearby --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can't tell you where they are because the next question would be just where are they, and just where are they going tomorrow. You see?

Q Mr. President, does this extension of patrol involve any revision of the so-called Pan-American Security Zone?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q No connection?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, are we doing anything special, with any --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Just an extension. After all, it's just what has been going on for a year and a half. Now, that will answer all your questions.

Q This is on Greenland specifically, sir? Are we doing anything specifically to counter-act any Axis --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us whether there were more than just wagon trains --?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q All wagon trains?

THE PRESIDENT: All kinds of wagon trains. (he laughs)

CONSTANTINE BROWN: Mr. President, last week you said that people in this country are not quite aware of the gravity of the situation. Would you care to amplify that a little bit?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think, Constantine, without some further, some further thought about it beforehand. Perhaps I could put it as one little thought to throw out.

There are people who in effect in this country I am sorry to say, probably -- I can't recognize any faces here, but some in this room -- who are adopting a rather curious attitude, which I should say hadn't been thought through -- what will I say?-- a level of intelligence that doesn't apply to most of us (he laughs), and that is the idea that will -- like an editorial I read this morning -- that there is a new order in the world, a new form of government, who say out of one side of their

mouth, "No, I don't like it, I don't like dictatorship," and then out of the other side of the mouth, "Well, it's going to beat Democracy, it's going to defeat Democracy, therefore, I might just as well accept it." Now, I don't call that good Americanism. I am not mentioning any names (some laughter) but that attitude is held by a minority in this country. It's just the same way -- I read an editorial on Monday, or something like that the other day -- which said in effect -- Why, we have always had conquerors all through the history of the world, and Alexander the Great who tried to conquer all the known world, he was not satisfied to stay at home -- where was it, Macedonia? -- he went out and tried to conquer lots of people he never saw before, just to add to his empire. He was not satisfied with his own people, his own flesh and blood.

And there was another fellow called Caesar. He was not satisfied with the Rome of his day, and went out to conquer the whole of Europe and North Africa, and the Near East, and so forth and so on. And then there were, according to this mentality -- there were two other conquerors -- one was Cromwell, who conquered England, and the other one was George Washington, who conquered America. (laughter) Now, any mentality that lumps George Washington and Cromwell with Caesar and Napoleon -- oh, yes, Napoleon -- Napoleon and Alexander the Great -- well, all I can say is I am awfully sorry that people with those mentalities are in such high places that they can write or talk at all. (he laughs) It's just dumb.

Now, coming back to this mythical person in our midst (he laughs) who takes the attitude that dictatorships are going to win anyway, I think that is almost equally dumb, because I am 'agin' them, and everybody

else in this country -- the overwhelming majority are 'agin' them. We will fight for the Democratic process, and that's all. We are willing to fight for the Democratic process. I don't want to lie down and say, "Dictatorship is inevitable. We have got to do the best we can. We have got to make our peace. We have got to yield to the demands of the dictatorship because it has the military might to win." I don't think along those lines, and neither do you.

CONSTANTINE BROWN: Mr. President, how is it that the Army, which needs now distinguished fliers, etc., has not asked Colonel Lindbergh to rejoin his rank as Colonel? If I am not mistaken, I think he is still on the Reserve list?

THE PRESIDENT: Still?

Q I think he resigned. He resigned.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

If you go back to the roster of the Army in the Civil War -- we called on people there from liberty-loving people on both sides -- both the Confederates and the North; and from outside this country we had people fighting for us because they believed in it. On the other hand, the Confederacy and the North let certain people go. In other words, in both armies there were -- what shall I call them? -- there were Vallandighams. Vallandigham. (Ohio's Clement L. Vallandigham, leader of the "Copperheads" in the Civil War)

Well, Vallandigham, as you know, was an appeaser. (laughter) He wanted to make peace from 1863 on because the North 'couldn't win.' Once upon a time there was a place called Valley Forge and there were an awful lot of appeasers that pleaded with Washington to quit, because he 'couldn't win'. Just because he couldn't win'. See what Tom Paine

said at that time in favor of Washington keeping on fighting!

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: It's worth reading.

MR. GODWIN: Wasn't it, "These are the times that try men's souls"?

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (answering Mr. Godwin) Yes, that particular paragraph.

MR. GODWIN: That --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That paragraph?

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: In fact, I read it in the Post or the Star the other day.

Q Were you still talking about Mr. Lindbergh?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter)

Q Have you had any reports, sir, that some forty percent of the aid we have sent across the seas is lost?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think that is entirely manufactured. I don't think anybody has any figures at all on it. Nothing like as high as that.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q The defense industries in Detroit seem to be concerned over the refusal of the Canadian Government to permit the transfer of supplies to Canada in trucks. Did you take that up yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it. Look it up.

Q The point is that it has been going on for several months. They are perfectly willing that they should be hauled in Canadian trucks and labor, but the railroads and railroad labor in Canada have bitterly resisted permitting the use of trucks. They say it saves from two days in the transferring of supplies. If they could --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hadn't heard about it. I would have to

find out.

Q The Board of Commerce and Industry out there seem to be quite stirred up about it.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. We've got enough now.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #739,
Executive Offices of the President,
April 29, 1941, 4.10 P.M.

MR. GODWIN: Let the fat boy sit down!

THE PRESIDENT: It's a shame to have to work today.

MR. GODWIN: I suspected you didn't work all day. Did you go on a nice drive just now? What did you see?

THE PRESIDENT: The airport. (Washington National Airport at Gravelly Point)

MR. GODWIN: Do you like it?

THE PRESIDENT: Fine. It will be nice when they grow some grass on it. So much dust there now.

MR. GODWIN: Can I ask you a question about it?

(The President indicated later)

THE PRESIDENT: When are they moving in?

MR. GODWIN: I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- when are they going to use it for commercial planes?

MR. GODWIN: I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: Who knows? Who is here from Washington? (jokingly) When do they open the airport?

MR. GODWIN: I was going to ask you the same thing. They change the date on it every now and then. They were going to have it last December.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have two small matters here. As part of the lend-lease program, I have written a letter to the Secretary of Commerce to please make a survey of all the civil transport lines -- airlines -- and see how much -- how many civilian transport planes it is possible for us to buy from them here, to turn over for the defense of the Democracies. There

is a real need for such planes, and we hope to get a substantial number.

The other thing is a request of Mr. Stettinius, (Edward R. Stettinius, Council of National Defense) with the approval of Mr. Jones (Jesse Jones, Secretary of Commerce) and of Mr. Schram (Emil Schram, Chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation) -- Mr. Schram is going on the invitation of Mr. Stettinius to become Assistant Director of Priorities temporarily, retaining his status as Chairman of the R.F.C. while performing this extra duty.

I think that's all I've got.

Q Before we get further afield, I would like to ask about a local matter. Do you have any comment to make on the Overton Plan to fix the Federal payment toward expenses of the District Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything. They were in here a couple of weeks ago.

Q Mr. President, in regard to this airline situation, some of the airlines still claim they can't get enough planes for their own domestic requirements. Has that all been withheld?

THE PRESIDENT: I am asking Mr. Jones (Jesse Jones) to find out.

Q Whether they have enough, and then whether they can turn in some of the ones they now have?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Would it be the idea that they could get enough planes to replace some --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. I am just asking the question.

Q What are those planes needed for?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What are those planes needed for?

THE PRESIDENT: They are needed by the people who are fighting for Democracy.

Q Are you asking that for any time?

THE PRESIDENT: Right off now, quick.

Q Right away?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Any certain kind of a plane?

THE PRESIDENT: Any half-way known kind of plane.

MR. GODWIN: What about your trip to the airport today, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have been asking to find out. I went down to see how nearly it is finished. There is still a cloud of dust down there. I hope it will be used. The quicker the better, from my point of view, that we get off that present field. It is going to be a very fine field when finished, but it seems to me that I dedicated it a long, long time ago. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything contemplated in the way of a national daylight saving (he hesitates here) -- movement?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard anything about it, except what I read. I think that is entirely a matter for Congress. I am perfectly willing to work and play on any time they set. (laughter)

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President, is there any possibility of the curtailment of commercial aviation in this country to meet the demands --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Not that I know of.

Q Is there any possibility of cutting down in the CAA training program, -- possibly a civilian training program?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you the details of that at the present time. There was a cut provided, as I remember it, in the Budget. What it went to I don't know.

Q Mr. President, there are rumors of dissatisfaction with respect to the current production of airplanes. If that is true, has it come to you, and does this request have anything to do with it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, this has nothing to do with it. Nothing at all.

Q Mr. President, could you comment on the visit of the new Chinese foreign minister to you today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He has been on the list of appointments ever since we knew he was going back to China.

Q Would any of these planes turned over from the commercial -- civilian airlines possibly go to China, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I am not going to tell you where planes are or are going to go.

Q Could you tell us --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It might help somebody else.

Q Could you tell us, Mr. President, whether the Chinese foreign minister mentioned the need for planes?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he did not.

Q When he left here, sir, he said he was encouraged by the cooperation between the United States and China.

THE PRESIDENT: So was I. I was too. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you think it is liable at this time to transfer any part of the Coast Guard to the Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: There might be something on that pretty soon. How soon I can't tell you.

Q Admiral Stark (Admiral Harold R. Stark, Chief of Naval Operations) indicated this afternoon, sir, that foreign ships in that -- might be transferred to Britain.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know -- I don't know what he is referring to.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President, in a speech this afternoon, Admiral Stark said something about naval patrols being extended some two thousand miles out from the United States.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends where you measure from.

Q Is there any possibility of elaborating that here?

THE PRESIDENT: Did he say where it was measured from?

Q No, he did not, except from the United States.

THE PRESIDENT: From the United States? What does he mean by the United States?

Q He said they were going half-way across the Atlantic.

THE PRESIDENT: From where?

Q From North to South, all the way down the line. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: From North to South? (he laughs as he said this)

Q He indicated that they were patrolling pretty well out, and that the line was half-way across.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it is necessary for me to elaborate at all on that, except to ask you to -- if you would really like to write something, to re-read what I said last week, because the maps that have been drawn, and in the news' stories that came out immediately, they were all right, but the columns, editorials, etc., they just didn't follow copy. Do you get what I mean by that? You fellows were all right. If you re-read what I said, you would get some idea of that. Well, I think even any of us could draw a map from what I said, -- (he laughs)

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- I haven't seen a map yet that meant anything -- not a single map. They have all been cock-eyed.

Q Mr. President, the confusion seems to arise from talking about this thing. La Guardia said definitely a thousand miles from --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Who said a thousand miles? Now just let me repeat exactly what I said. The only time I mentioned a thousand miles was in a sentence -- I can't quote you verbatim, but essentially this -- that a year and a half ago, in September, 1939, at that time we were patrolling a thousand miles out from the eastern shore of Delaware. Now, that is the only time I ever mentioned a thousand miles.

Q Well --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, they didn't follow copy.

Q La Guardia previously said a thousand miles from our coast, -- southward --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q La Guardia had said previously a thousand miles.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what La Guardia said, or anybody else.

Q Today Admiral Stark said two thousand, but he didn't say what point he was mentioning.

THE PRESIDENT: Because it means nothing. I gave you one thousand miles, September, 1939, from the eastern shore of Delaware -- or Maryland.

Q Is that the present limit?

THE PRESIDENT: Now that is the only time I ever mentioned it and I stated it to you as an historic fact. I didn't say that that was all we are doing today. Now do you see? You have got to follow copy. (he laughs)

Q Where does that leave us today?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Where does that leave us today?

THE PRESIDENT: Read what I said the other day. Figure it out again for another story.

Q You did say that the patrol would be extended as far as --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) As far as necessary, to protect this hemisphere.

Q Has it been extended since you spoke to us?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you.

Q Could you tell us, sir --?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That is purely an operational matter. Where the actual ships were last Tuesday as compared to -- last Friday as compared to Tuesday, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, Admiral Stark --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Measure a map to see how far two thousand miles is. Maybe he isn't following copy either. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, is it satisfactory --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You could draw a map on this easily, in words of one syllable and one sentence -- that it would be extended out as far as necessary for the protection of this hemisphere. Now is that clear? Now, how can you draw a line on that statement, I ask you?

Q Mr. President, can you say whether American warships will be prohibited from entering the combat zone as defined around Great Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: The old one that we defined. Remember that -- I don't know, I don't know.

Q There is a certain zone that has been defined by Germany as a zone of operations around Great Britain.

THE PRESIDENT: I know absolutely nothing about that.

Q How about the ones you defined?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether -- in the first place, of course, that Executive Order has nothing to do with United States warships -- absolutely nothing.

Q And they could go in there?

THE PRESIDENT: They can go in there if it is necessary for the defense of this hemisphere. That doesn't mean that they are going in there.

Q Is it limited to merchant ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. The same old sentence still applies -- anywhere that it is necessary for the defense of the American hemisphere. Now, is that clear? Don't try to put that on paper with a line, because it will be different every single day that this patrol is going on, as it has been for a year and a half. Now, is that clear? Any more geographical questions? (he laughs)

Q Yes, what do you hear from Greenland?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a peep. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there has been a proposal, I understand, on your desk for some time for the establishment of dirigible bases up and down the coast for patrol duty. Is there any action being taken in the immediate future on these dirigible bases?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they have been approved, but you had better check.

Q I think they have been approved by the Navy Department, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they have been approved by me, but I think you had better check.

Q Mr. President, is Mr. Jesse Jones, in addition to his other duties, to be known as a super-mediation board?

THE PRESIDENT: It looked like that last night, didn't it? (he laughs)

Q Can you give us the reason for calling in Mr. Jones on the situation, outside of the fact that he did a good job?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's a pretty good reason. (he laughs)

Q Well, was there any financial connection involved?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. (laughter) Not that Jesse and I know about. (more laughter)

Q Well, now that this settlement seems to have been reached, is there any arrangement, or any understanding, that "more steam" will be put back of the effort to rearrange Southern freight rates?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is probably one of the things that will be brought out in further mediation conferences.

Q Between the Southerners and the mine workers?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q That would apply only to coal, or all Southern freight rates?

THE PRESIDENT: That would apply to everything, like opening up Pandora's Box.

Q Would there be any other Southern leaders called in?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Have you any comment on Mr. Winston Churchill's speech Sunday?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did you hear the speech?

(the President nodded his head)

Q Mr. President, the people of South Carolina would like very much to know if you are planning on filling the Supreme Court vacancy at the present time? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, now that this coal mine trouble is out of the way, I might be able to turn my thoughts to a few other things -- I don't know.

Q Do you expect --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But if I don't turn my thoughts to other things, I hope they won't be disappointed. (he laughs)

Q The Supreme Court session lasts only another five weeks.

THE PRESIDENT: By Jove, that's right! (laughter) I am glad you mentioned it.

Q Mr. President, do you expect --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I am getting near the dead-line. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, do you expect to ask for some price control legislation soon?

THE PRESIDENT: What kind?

MR. GODWIN: Price control.

THE PRESIDENT: Mmmmm -- yes and no. I don't really know when it will be advisable to do some further things on price control. In other words, it is a matter that we are giving attention to every day, and I don't know. I might do it, and I might not.

Q Did Mr. Henderson have a concrete plan toward the objective that --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, no concrete plan.

Q What price quotations aren't you able to make now?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't the faintest idea.

Q If legislation is in the offing, it would seem to imply --

THE PRESIDENT: No -- general situation, major general. (jokingly)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #740,
Executive Offices of the President,
May 2, 1941, 10.50 a.m., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Are we taking Earl (Mr. Godwin) with us? I thought you were going to be Apple Blossom Queen (laughter) -- I mean Apple Blossom King.

MR. GODWIN: No, sir.

Q What gender did you say?

THE PRESIDENT: Are you going to do that down there?

(Mr. Godwin laughs)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I thought that's why you were going. I didn't say Applejack King, I said Apple Blossom King. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I would like to go. They forgot to tell me.

Q You'll have to hitch-hike. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: The Applejack King! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: In the old days in Dutchess County -- (to the reporter) don't take this down --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) I may be down there tomorrow.

THE PRESIDENT: That would be nice. Yes, yes.

You have had this mimeographed? (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: It's all ready.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have sent a letter to Mr. Knudsen and Mr. Hillman. Steve (Mr. Early) will have it ready for you when you go out. It is:

> "My recent discussions with you have emphasized in my mind the urgent necessity of expanding and speeding up the manufacture and use of critical machine tools. I have watched the steady and substantial growth of the machine tool industry during the past months. At the same time I have seen the critical machines in our defense plants used in an ever growing number of hours each

week. I know that this increase has been caused by the hard work of yourselves, of your associates and of the men who manage and work in the plants throughout the nation.

"But it is not enough. The ever increasing demands for munitions, planes and ships, caused by the critical situation which confronts our nation, requires that they be produced in even larger quantities and ahead of the schedules assigned to them. It is essential that industry continue to increase the number of vital machines manufactured and that every single critical machine in the United States be used the maximum number of hours each week.

"Every effort should be made to utilize to the very limit those critical machines; if they be in defense plants by increased hours of operation on the work at hand; if in other plants by finding defense items or parts for them to make or, as a last resort, by moving the tools to defense plants where they may be urgently needed.

"Our problem is to see to it that there is no idle critical machine in the United States. The goal should be to work these machines twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, relieving the machines only for such time as is required for overhauling and repair.

"The country should be further combed for men who have had experience on these machines. We should ask them to transfer their efforts to this operation which is so essential to our defense. No effort or justifiable expense should be spared in speeding this program, in order to obtain the objective which our national interests require.

"Workers and managers will, I believe, join with you with spirit and determination in pursuing and achieving this goal at the earliest possible moment."

Q Mr. President, in that connection, have the plans been worked out to speed up plane production by having auto and plane manufacturers turn out about 500 four-engine bombers a month?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you any figures, but naturally, of course, that has been under way for several months; getting auto manufacturers to turn out something. It is not a complete plan -- turning out parts toward a plane.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, your reference to the men to work the machines strikes me as being an interesting part of that letter. I think the

country thinks that there are not enough skilled workers on those machines. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: There are a great many skilled workers who are capable of running machines who haven't been married to the machine yet. In other words, they are doing something else, and that includes, of course -- a thing which we are beginning to realize from experience, and there are a certain number - not very many - in other words, it's not worth a lead -- all people who are subject to the draft or have actually been taken for Selective Service who are capable of working these machines.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) So the War Department at the present time is making a recheck and a new study, so that we will not turn into an artilleryman, or an infantryman, or engineers, the younger men under 35 who are perfectly capable of running the machines. I might say the same thing -- this re-study based on experience is being made in certain professions. Well, just for example, a young man who is on his way to being a doctor or an engineer, he probably should not be turned into an infantryman because we want to keep the flow of the young men of the country into the -- what might be called -- the necessary defense professions. We know probably that we would need to keep the flow going in doctors and engineers.

I was talking yesterday with the Cabinet -- we were all joking more or less -- as to what professions would work in and what would not, and we decided that lawyers, like myself, and newspapermen, like you, would not come in as an essential profession. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, did you say that you can put these machines on a 24-hour, 7-day basis and they will find enough men --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, we think we can.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, as I happen to be a member of this local draft board machinery, it is perfectly impossible from the War Department's stuff that we have before us to differentiate these men. They have got to get somewhere near the draft or into the Army before the War Department will ever find out that they are capable of working --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, that's it. That's exactly what I mean.

Q Does this imply a new inventory of machine tools in the country?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you that, whether they have got it now or not; I don't know.

Q The National Association of Manufacturers made a great to-do on turning over to Knudsen and Hillman their survey of the middle-sized plants, and the Army and O.P.M. already have the large-sized plants.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Now, how much farther does this go?

THE PRESIDENT: It goes down to the smaller plants.

Q They claim they go down to five-men plants.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's right. Perhaps the Army had some of them beforehand. They may have had a lot of smaller plants too. In other words, this is a pool of information.

Q What I am trying to get at -- what could Knudsen and Hillman do now?

THE PRESIDENT: Just as I said in the letter. In the first place, to get a pool of all the useful or potentially useful machine tools in the country. Whether it is -- whether there is one of them in the garage at Hyde Park, we will be under the five-men plant basis, right down to the smallest plant that you are talking about.

Number two, either use them where they are, or move them where they can be used.

Q Oh, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And the third, to comb over the men again to see if we can't get enough of them to man all of these machines.

Q In that connection, what about the man who is already in the Army and it is then found he could operate one of these tools?

THE PRESIDENT: That is part of the study.

Q Shouldn't he be taken out of the Army and put on this job, or would part of his job --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is being studied now.

Q Mr. President, the London reports this morning speak of a British desire for more active participation on our part in the economic blockade of Germany. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask the State Department.

Q It speaks particularly of the desire for general freezing of Axis funds.

Q Do you have a new job for Myron Taylor (President Roosevelt's special representative to the Vatican)? I understand he has taken a house here. Is he going to be given some new set-up?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I don't think that he is quite ready to work yet. I hope his health will be improved very soon, but I do not think it is to be taken up yet.

Q Is there anything new on the Coast Guard?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President, did you see John Cudahy's (Ex-Ambassador to Belgium) story this morning that the German government had made a study of a possible invasion of the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, anything new on the appointment of a minister to New Zealand?

THE PRESIDENT: Minister to where?

Q New Zealand.

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't heard a word.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the mission of your son, Captain James Roosevelt?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q About the mission that he is performing?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. You would have to ask the Marine Corps.

Q Mr. President, as a matter of fact, in your letter to Knudsen, did you say that there would be sufficient machines supplied so as not to increase the hours of work?

THE PRESIDENT: We hope so.

Q Mr. President, is there anything new on the appointment of a Supreme Court Judge?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. (laughter)

CONSTANTINE BROWN: Mr. President, any amount of stories are floating around about large quantities of gasoline and oil going to Japan persistently up to now. I have not checked this. It is difficult to check up on that, but do you know anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: You can get the figures. Of course, you have to differentiate. When you come down to -- gas and oil is a pretty broad term. I think the State Department and Department of Commerce have the figures on what is going out in some of the categories that fall under the term.--I haven't got them, --

Q Is there any plan --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- octanes, and things like that.

Q High strategy.

Q Is there any plan to reduce those exports?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You would have to ask the State Department.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

(laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President, there has been a report here that you might transfer some of the administrative agencies to the Middle West.

THE PRESIDENT: No, you know what the housing problem is here. I think that Mr. Carmody (Administrator, Federal Works Agency) has been looking around to see if there was any modest, self-contained unit which could be moved out of Washington to some point nearby.

Q Mr. President, nearby?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any details.

Q One of the agencies mentioned was the I.C.C. (Interstate Commerce Commission). I thought that might go to the Middle West.

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard that.

Q Thank you, sir.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #741,
Executive Offices of the President,
May 16, 1941, 10.40 A.M., E.S.T.

(Press Conferences for May 6, 9 and 13 were canceled due to minor illness of the President)

MR. GODWIN: How do you feel, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along all right. Still feel a little weak, but otherwise I am coming along all right.

MR. GODWIN: You look swell.

THE PRESIDENT: Complexion is better, and everything else. It's a good thing.

FEMALE VOICE: He looks very nice.

Q I see Steve (Mr. Early) sneaked away.

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that funny? It appears every time that this Pinehurst tournament is on, something terribly important is on too, and we catch Steve out.

Q Is he inspecting something?

THE PRESIDENT: I understand last night he had to issue the White House statement through McDermott (Michael J. McDermott, Chief, Division of Current Information, State Department).

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q We understand it too.

THE PRESIDENT: Poor old Steve called up from Pinehurst this morning. (he laughs)

I don't know why everybody's coming in. I haven't any news, and I haven't prepared any news.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that I have any news. I have got so much that

I haven't even tried to find something for you.

(slight pause here)

Q Mr. President, do you think there is likely to be a change in the status of Martinique?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't answer hypothetical questions.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Are you asking Admiral Leahy (U. S. Ambassador to France) to come back and report?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is a hypothetical question too. I don't think there is anything in it.

Q Mr. President, what is the status of Franco-American relations on the basis of the statement which you issued last night?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any more news than what you have got; you have got all there is.

Q Er -- if there should be any --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Hypothetical! (laughter)

Q You mean the status, Mr. President?

Q Isn't it true, sir, that you made that statement -- that is, your statement that was made over the heads of the government to the French people? At least that is the way --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Just spoke for itself.

Q And at the same time our Coast Guard took over?

THE PRESIDENT: That is interpreted perhaps on <u>your</u> part. (he laughs)

Q Does the diplomatic status quo remain?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't frankly do any interpreting, obviously, on things these days. They speak for themselves, and they are too serious to try to interpret.

MR. JOSEPH K. SMITH: Mr. President, if it was necessary to take some action in regard --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) How did you start the sentence? (laughter)

(In a previous Press Conference -- #738 of 4-25-41, Mr. Joseph Kingsbury Smith of I.N.S. had addressed the President "Mr. Secretary".)

Q Mr. President, are there any further steps on French escorting --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have no news on that.

Q Mr. President --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) One more chance -- what about those two shiploads of wheat a month?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Really, I don't know.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That is really a straight answer.

Q The pact at Havana with the 21 American Republics provides for taking over the islands of any European nation if they are a threat to this hemisphere. Do you plan any action?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, here is a specific one. Ships will soon leave for North Africa to distribute food there. Has that plan been changed?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, can we take up a domestic subject for a moment? Did you know in advance about the regulations that the Federal Communications Commission issued two weeks ago on broadcasting?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you say how you feel about those personally?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't read them.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President, is the Ethridge statement --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Did you receive --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Did what?

Q Mr. Ethridge's statement to the N.A.B. (National Association of Broadcasters) said that you had been deceived and almost betrayed by --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I have been thinking -- frankly, it is an awful thing to have to say, but there have been more important things in the last two or three weeks.

Q Mr. President, this is the first opportunity to see you since Secretary Stimson made his speech. Does that speech have your approval, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: You know the usual answer to that question. I have had it so many times and I have always made the same answer.

Q Mr. President, do you intend to send any representative to General De Gaulle's government?

THE PRESIDENT: General who?

Q General De Gaulle's government?

THE PRESIDENT: What about it?

Q Do you intend to send any representative to his government in London?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it at the present time. Not a subject for discussion, obviously.

Q Mr. President, does this dispatch from Vichy indicate the actual --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) From where?

Q From Vichy, indicating the extent to which the French government has agreed to collaborate --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You would have to ask the State Department about that -- about dispatches. They won't tell you anything. (laughter)

Q I wonder, sir, if you have had any direct communication from Admiral Leahy?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you would have to ask the State Department. They won't tell you.

Q Can you tell us anything about your conference with Commanding Officer King of the Atlantic Fleet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that we do it right along.

Q Mr. President, what is the --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Sometimes you hear about it and sometimes you don't.

Q Mr. President, how successful -- how successful do you consider the patrol system to be, as it is now operating?

THE PRESIDENT: How old is Ann? How old is Ann?

Q Well, we thought perhaps that Admiral King answered the question 'How old is Ann?' -- and how successfully the patrol is operating.

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask Admiral King. He won't tell you.

Q Mr. President, would you comment, sir --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Now of course, that is a question -- let's be perfectly frank -- you know it is perfectly silly. These things are matters of current action right along, things that happen from hour to hour, from day to day. I cannot talk in hypothetical terms; neither can I answer questions that call for glittering generalities like that last one, for instance, "Is the Atlantic patrol working?" -- a thing like that -- I just can't do it. I am not trying to lay down on this, but those are questions when things are terribly serious that I can't create hypothetical news for all of you good people. You have got to go on facts as they happen. No human being can prognosticate or guess what is going to happen tomorrow.

Q Mr. President, is this specific --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I would like to say all these things, but I just can't.

Q This is a specific instance -- do you recognize the action of the German government in extending combat zones to the Red Sea area?

THE PRESIDENT: I think things -- things of that kind are a question of fact almost entirely. Almost entirely a question of fact.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, it is a little bit like this -- You remember that way -- way back, I don't know how long ago, certainly a hundred years ago, there was the question of 'when is a blockade', and I am just using that as an analogy, a simile you might say, in which there are a good many points of difference because of change of method in warfare, but along during the -- back as far as -- certainly as far as the Napoleonic era, and possibly before, they were then called blockades, and it became pretty well recognized at that time that a blockade would be -- I won't say recognized, because that was a question more of state departments -- the question of a blockade was its effectiveness. You couldn't simply by a decree create a blockade. Furthermore, the whole idea of blockade involved something else, which was freedom of the seas, which was an historic American policy. I have given you a lead, if you want to follow it up.

In 1803 or 4 -- you all know the story, I have used it so often -- there had been ten years or fifteen years of depredations by the Barbary Corsairs against our commerce. We bought them off. We sent them gold, and finally they demanded a fully fitted-out frigate as a gift, and the United States Government, in order to pay that tribute to assure the

safety of ships over there, actually built and paid for a frigate, armed her, put on her guns, and sent her over as a present to one of the Deys (a governor of Algiers at that time) in North Africa, and hoping to buy peaceful commerce. The thing did not work, and they kept on capturing American ships, and finally it got to the point where they said in effect -- they said, "The Mediterranean is closed to American commerce. We say so." In other words, "We hereby create a blockade of the Mediterranean against American ships." Well, the first question was also the effective number, because they were only able to capture perhaps one ship in a dozen, and number two, it was interfering with the -- with the freedom of the seas, and we sent Commodore Preble over there, and in a couple of years we made the Mediterranean Sea free for American commerce.

A little bit the same thing without the blockade element which happened before that down in the West Indies -- the French privateers, and the English privateers and the Spanish privateers -- mostly French --, and we, without declaring war, we sent the infant Navy down there, and we cleaned up. I think they had something like 101 different actions -- engagements -- in the general West Indian area, and made it -- the whole area -- safe for American shipping. The thing last two and a half years.

Q Do you think --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Again, freedom of the seas. I don't think -- that's just a little lead for you to follow up. Read the history books about it.

Q Mr. President, what is the present status of the Civilian Defense program, -- Home Defense?

THE PRESIDENT: Almost ready.

Q Where have I heard that before?

THE PRESIDENT: It really is. I really think it is. Probably over the week end or by Monday I will have something on it.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

Q (interposing) I was just going to ask if there were any modern counterparts of the Barbary pirates?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I told you to use your haid. (the President used this pronunciation) (laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, has Mr. Hopkins been sworn in, or is he functioning, or what is --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't seen him this morning. Last night he was functioning. (loud laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: Has he been sworn in?

THE PRESIDENT: Sworn in? I don't know.

MISS MAY CRAIG: What is his job?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You will have to ask the fellow that pays him.

MISS MAY CRAIG: I don't know where that is.

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh!

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, askBill Hassett to find out for you where he gets his pay. Then go and ask the fellow that pays him. Then go ask the Comptroller General, and then the Treasury. Finally you will find out just how he is functioning.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Well, that's what I would like to find out. (laughter)

MR. RAYMOND P. BRANDT: Mr. President, have you or the -- reached any point yet where you can say anything about a ceiling on price legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think, Pete, the thing is under study at the present time, and I ought to probably begin to get reports on it within -- well, within the next week.

Q Will that include wage rates and other compensation?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, you saw the Argentine Foreign Minister yesterday. Would you say a word about your visit with him?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we had a very delightful talk, and we talked about the general problem of the Americas, but only in general terms; nothing specific.

Q Mr. President, does our Government consider Petain a free agent?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I would have to do a lot of studying on that question.

Q Mr. President, do you have any suggestion as to whether the million dollars that Secretary Morgenthau suggested could be cut from nondefense expenditures, where that million -- billion -- could be cut?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I would like to have some suggestions on that for the protagonists of that theory. They would be very helpful.

Q Have you asked Secretary Morgenthau for them?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am asking <u>you</u> for them.

Q I think he would be a better authority.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know there are a great many people who say it is so easy to cut -- why don't they go ahead and cut? Then this group of people who write or talk along this line, you say to them, "Give me a lead for a bill, give me a suggestion." And then the answer is, "I don't know anything about it, it is none of our business". It is a very clever game; beautiful game. Passing the buck. And whose responsibility is it? Well,

I should say at the present time it is primarily the responsibility of the people who say it can be done. (emphasizing)

Q Doesn't that include Mr. Morgenthau, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q He said it could be done, sir?

Q That's right he did.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you think it can be done, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: It is up to the people in the House and the Senate who say it can be done. Now, let us hear from them.

MR. GODWIN: Here are three items that have been mentioned -- National Youth and C.C.C., and I think that Farm Parity.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Those have been definitely mentioned and so far as I know there have been no attempts to follow up that suggestion.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Let's do a little analyzing on those three.

On the N.Y.A. we are turning out at the present time, through N.Y.A., a very large number of men and women -- young men and young women -- who are being taught to be useful in defense industries. Now, that is a tremendously important thing. Now, I don't care particularly what appropriation it comes out of, but we do need their skill. Somebody ought to teach. Therefore, I don't believe that from the practical point of view it would save anything toward this department if we were to cut down on the N.Y.A. and do the same thing -- teaching these people through some other appropriation. It's as short as it's long.

Now the C.C.C. is, of course, a little bit different, because most

of the boys are below the draft age, and something undoubtedly will be done to tie their work in more closely with that of the Selectees. We are not quite ready yet, because frankly we haven't any bill that everybody has approved, but we are working on it.

As to the change -- possible change -- in the Selective Draft age, I think we can be quite certain that the C.C.C. will work in more closely with the general training for National Defense than it is at the present time. Again, if you cut off the C.C.C. you probably spend the same amount of money in other forms of defense in which these same boys would be used. Then the third thing that Earl (Mr. Godwin) suggests is this Agricultural bill, and of course, that hasn't come to me yet. The total amount involved is far greater than the estimates which I sent to the Congress. I think that is a very fertile field to consider, but the total is not anything like a billion dollars.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Morgenthau's suggestion related to the $500,000,000 A.A.A. soil conservation --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That's it.

Q Already appropriated and provided for.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, look, I suppose the easiest thing to do is to mention something that I haven't seen mentioned, and that is -- I think it would simplify things for the country.

They talk about parity. What do they mean? They mean the total amount of money -- cash -- that a farmer gets for his crop, and the figure is based on certain -- a certain relationship that did exist between Agriculture and industrial wages. Way back -- I forgot -- what was the period, 1910 or 1911?

Q 1914 isn't it?

Q 1909 to 1914.

THE PRESIDENT: That was called -- that was set as an objective for cash -- let us say money to go into the hands, the pocketbooks of the farmers, and when that amount was fixed a good many years ago, it looked like an almost unattainable ideal. The parity for cotton the farmer was to get was as I remember it -- I think -- around fifteen cents. At that time cotton was selling around 8-½. Well, that was a long ways to go. That was, what? -- 6-½ cents more to go.

The parity for wheat that the farmer was to get was around, -- oh, -- $1.15, and wheat was selling at around 67¢. Well, that was a long ways to go. And so, in order to help to bridge the gap and at the same time do a lot of future good for the country, we put in payments, direct payments to the farmers, for certain agreements on their part to maintain their soil in such a way that it would not run off into the ocean, terracing and so forth and so on, and they were paid a certain amount for that. That was one form of benefit. Then there came along another form of benefit that was another cash amount, all of which beyond the soil conservation and the other benefits were intended to help bridge this gap between the existing price to the farmer and this ideal price of parity.

Well, that was the objective then, and we made rather definite progress towards it, as for example, at the present time, let us take the price of cotton. The parity is still, -- oh, somewhere around 15 to 15-½c, and the cotton farmer is getting about 2-3/4c in the way of benefits toward that price, in cash. Now that is an amazing thing, which means roughly that if you add those payments on loans of the Federal Government to the market price, that he would get -- oh, call the market price ten or ten and a quarter cents -- let us take any figure, of course

it varies from time to time -- but in that general neighborhood, suppose he gets ten and a quarter cents for his cotton, and you add payments from the Government of 2-1/4¢, what does he get? He gets 13¢ cash to the farmer. Now that is pretty good.

Oh, no, it's not parity, but it's better than he ever got before, since nineteen hundred -- I don't know -- oh, -- twenty-four, something like that. It's working on the way up toward parity.

Now in any bill which carries a loan of 85%, you have got to figure whether that 85% takes into consideration these benefits that the Government is paying out anyway, because if you don't take them into consideration, the actual price to the farmer might go way above parity. Now, of course, there are some farmers that are getting more than -- more than parity today; like the cattle growers, they are way above parity, and there are three or four other different kinds of crops that are way above parity, <u>but the important thing is always to figure those cash benefits into the actual price received by the farmer</u> (the President emphasized these words by tapping his fingers on the desk), and the question is on this bill Have those cash benefits been taken into consideration on it?

Now that is the simplest way of putting it. I haven't acted on the bill yet, because it hasn't come to me, but that will be one of the prime considerations when I take it up.

Q Are you ready to answer that question yourself at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet, because I haven't got all my figures.

Q There are still reports, new reports, going about that the Government will go into the steel business. Have you any comment, please?

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q Birmingham, Alabama, for example.

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #742,
Executive Offices of the President,
May 20, 1941, 10.45 a.m., E.S.T. (instead of 4.00 p.m.)

(Two guests were at this Press Conference: Dr. and Mrs. Lewis A. Hopkins, brother of Harry Hopkins)

THE PRESIDENT: All kinds of things today.

(Pause here while waiting for newspapermen to file into room, during which Mr. Early and Miss May Craig engaged in conversation)

THE PRESIDENT: You haven't got this yet (indicating mimeographed release). It hasn't been handed out.

MR. GODWIN: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a lot of things here. Steve (Mr. Early) has outside the copies of the Executive Order that was signed this morning creating the Office of Civilian Defense. The Executive Order explains itself and sets up this Office as part of the Office of Emergency Management, in the Executive Office of the President. Mayor La Guardia will head it. He will be the Director.

In paragraph two it lists the objectives of this Office, -- a, b, c, d, -- e, f, g, h. The Director sets up the internal organization. There are two principal subdivisions of the Office -- I am summarizing for you. The first is a Board for Civilian Protection to be composed of the Director as Chairman, and a representative from War, Navy, Justice, Federal Security, and in addition representatives of certain organizations -- the Council of State Governments, the American Municipal Association and the United States Conference of Mayors. This Board will advise and assist in the formulation of civilian de-

fense programs and measures, appropriate to the varying needs in each part of the nation, designed to afford adequate protection of life and property in the event of emergency. Members serve without compensation; so does the Director.

Secondly, there is in this Office of Civilian Defense a Volunteer Participation Committee of not more than twenty members, with the Director as Chairman. This Committee will serve in an advisory -- as an advisory planning board in considering proposals and developing programs designed to sustain national morale, and to provide opportunities for constructive civilian participation in the defense effort. Those members also serve without compensation. The general -- the Mayor will be down tomorrow and take office and start things, get the machinery together and put it in operation.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Does he remain as Mayor?

THE PRESIDENT: What, what?

Q Does he remain as Mayor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, the supposition is that this Directorship will be almost a Cabinet rank, is that true?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I should say that the lead was the defense need, not any small question as to rank. It is rather small compared with the defense need.

MR. GODWIN: Would you like to give us a little picture of what this might do?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think this -- I think this covers it fairly well.

(indicating the mimeographed copy of the Order before him) I think these --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Maybe it's in it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- It covers it pretty well. Well, the first is that it serves as a center for the coordination of certain civilian defense activities that involve relationships between the Federal Government and the State and the local governments, keeping contact with those State and local governments and their defense agencies, and facilitate relationships between such units of government and the agencies of the Federal Government in respect to defense problems. Well, in other words, out of the 48 States -- I don't remember how many -- but about 42, I think, already have State councils of defense, and this Office of Civilian Defense will work in large part through them, probably on a decentralized regional basis, with regional centers. We are considering, for example, the establishment of nine regional offices to take care of this decentralization in accordance with the nine Corps Areas. It seems to be a logical way of putting it together.

The next is to keep informed on problems that arise from the impact of the industrial and military defense effort on local communities, to take necessary steps to secure cooperation of appropriate Federal departments and agencies in dealing with these problems.

Third, assist State and local governments in the establishment of State and local defense councils, or other agencies designed to coordinate civilian defense activities. Well, that means that in, for instance, the States that have not yet set up councils of national defense, or those States which have set them up but where they are principally still on paper without active functioning, they -- this -- er --

Office will help them to function on a generally similar plan, based on the needs of the State or the region.

Er -- fourth, with the assistance of the Board for Civilian Protection, study and plan measures designed to afford adequate protection of life and property. That -- that involves the tieing in of the -- all these new State Guards, which are not National Guards, on defense of public properties, bridges and culverts, plants, and so forth and so on; the organization of fire departments, the planning for the protection of -- physical protection of key points against bombing and things of that kind, using the existing local machinery, -- includes recruiting and training of auxiliaries.

At the same time, on that clause in the Order, I am sending word to the War Department on the Selective Draft that I want them to cooperate with the Director, and in letting him have the names of a great many people who for one reason or another would like to help but who have been put so far down on the Selective list that the chances are they won't be called. In other words, people back in the home towns who have got a wife and a lot of children who are dependent on them for support, but who could devote a certain amount of time to this kind of home defense -- civilian defense work. Those people will be given the opportunity to come in on this. It is a volunteer proposition.

Er -- the next -- the Volunteer Participation Committee considers these proposals, suggests plans, to promote activities designed to sustain the national morale, provides opportunities for constructive civilian participation in the defense program; review and approve all civilian defense programs of Federal departments involving the use of volunteer services to assure unity and balance in the application of such programs.

I might suggest there, to you ladies, that there are a great many women's organizations that want to do something to help. This is the coordinating body so that they will perform -- they will give useful activities instead of scattering them where they might not be so useful. More than a clearing house. That's about all.

MR. RAYMOND P. BRANDT: (St. Louis Post-Dispatch) Mr. President, how does this differ from the somewhat similar organizations set up in the World War?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. BRANDT: They had councils, State councils of defense and local organizations.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I don't know, Pete. I never came in touch with that.

Q There was.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, what disposition is made of the functions of Frank Bane's office (Division of State and Local Cooperation, O.E.M., Frank Bane, Director) under this order?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q That is the Division of State and Local Cooperation which has been set up down there.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you because I don't know.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Does this involve any Federal financing, in other words, if they need some training programs?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q In different places would the Federal Government help finance that, or would the local government?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the local government would probably finance that.

Q Not Federal?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You will need some appropriation for --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Q (continuing) -- payment of personnel.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh my, yes.

Q Will there be a request to Congress for such appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose temporarily it will come out of my emergency fund. I didn't ask the Director of the Budget about that. (turning) (Director of the Budget Harold Smith was not there) I imagine so, and then after that it will come out of a Congressional appropriation, probably reimbursing my fund. I hope so. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you received a letter from O.P.M. on the feasibility of a West Coast steel plant?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I have had four or five different letters. I think they have all been passed on to various agencies for further study.

Q No conclusion?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Then, number two -- if you are all through with that -- we have offered the Irish government to sell or charter two ships to take -- under the Irish flag -- food supplies for the civilian population of Ireland. I asked Mr. Davis -- I think he has already done it -- to see the Irish Minister and say that we are ready and willing to authorize an expenditure of about $500,000 from the relief fund for the purchase of food for the civilian populations in Ireland. This food would go over on the ship -- or ships -- if the offer is accepted.

Q Is there anything about defense materials for them?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, what relief fund are you speaking of?

THE PRESIDENT: That fifty-million-dollar fund.

MR. GODWIN: Oh.

Q Mr. President, are there any conditions attached to this offer?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except the condition of need.

Q Any designation of ships, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is this to be handled and distributed by the American Red Cross?

THE PRESIDENT: Red Cross? Yes, yes, yes.

Q The ships would be manned by Irish crews?

THE PRESIDENT: Irish crews? Oh, yes.

Q Is there any designation of what ships you have in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, is that a preliminary to anything else?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that a preliminary to anything else?

THE PRESIDENT: Preliminary?

Q Preliminary to anything else?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, we get the impression from Mr. Aiken (Frank Aiken, Defense Minister of the Irish Free State) that Ireland wants to pay for anything they get over here. Will they pay for that food?

THE PRESIDENT: The ships, of course, will carry a great deal more than five hundred thousand dollars worth of food.

Then, the third, which has been hanging fire for some time, you

might just as well -- you have nothing else to do except to write -- I will give you this one too. (he laughs)

For some time, in fact for just about a year, we have been checking up on this Thanksgiving Day date. (loud laughter) And as you know, at the time the change was made, it was done at the earnest solicitation of all the retail -- the great majority of retail -- er-- selling people, department stores, small stores, chain stores and everything else in most of the country, they claiming that the -- that their sales would go up very much, and it was much needed at that time -- if Thanksgiving and Christmas did not come so close together. So it was done as an experiment, and the experiment did not work. (laughter)

The Commerce Department has been obtaining data now for some time, on whether the retail sales would increase, and so did the Conference of Mayors in the different cities, and I have an enormous file here, (indicating) which shows in general that the large majority of the retail stores now reluctantly -- most of them say that it hasn't made much difference one way or the other in their sales, and the Conference of Mayors are about divided across the middle as to whether it has made much difference or hasn't. Some say it has and some say it hasn't, by what might be called a majority survey of the retailing agencies.

It is too late this year, in view of the fact that we have made rather definite commitments to our calendar makers and the retail stores themselves as to the date this year. So this year it will be the second Thursday before the first of December, and next year it will return to the last Thursday of November, as theretofore.

VOICE: (not loudly) Hurray!

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Can you tell us something about Mr. Lubin's appointment?

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any.

Q What is he going to do?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, he is -- he is helping on some special work. He is helping Harry Hopkins, and helping me.

Q There is some thought that he might be in charge --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I read it in the papers.

Q (continuing) -- of economic warfare.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a poor guess. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, the Congress passed a little bill which places the Philippines under export control. Is there any significance that you can put on this?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us what these Irish ships will carry besides food?

THE PRESIDENT: Food. More food.

Q Oh, I see, in addition to the five hundred thousand dollars the Red Cross gets.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us when you plan to make a report to Congress on the Lend-Lease program?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't plan.

Q Doesn't it -- aren't you required to every ninety days, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess I am. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I think you are. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Will somebody please check on that; and get me up a report to Congress, Steve. (Mr. Early)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you anything that you care to say about

the moot subject of convoys, and the --

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news on it at all.

MR. GODWIN: There is -- there is a great deal of news about it somewhere around -- printed stuff -- which is exciting the public.

THE PRESIDENT: That's not news.

MR. GODWIN: Well, we give you a golden opportunity right now.

THE PRESIDENT: It's printed stuff; it's not news. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, does this arrangement with the Irish mean that the discussions concerning their desire for defense materials are at an end?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I didn't know there were any.

Q Aiken (Frank Aiken, Defense Minister, Irish Free State) told us that they are very eager to get defense materials over here as well.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, all I can tell you on that, on the question of defense materials -- I should think it would be quite obvious -- I will have to tell you, though, off the record -- you can use it for background. As you know, we are turning out defense materials, and the demand for them is at the present time at least twice or three times the supply, and the general rule is that because of the shortage of supply, we are sending all we can -- out of those short supplies before we get into full production -- to those nations which are actively waging war in behalf of the maintenance of Democracy, and there isn't anything left over. I suppose that's the easiest way of putting it.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President --

MR. RAYMOND P. BRANDT (interposing): Mr. President, what is the status of this price-ceiling legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, Pete; haven't heard a word about it for two weeks.

Q Mr. President, several Cabinet members have been emphasizing the necessity of seeing to it that our war supplies actually get across the water. Now, Senator Barkley says that the supplies are getting there. Is there any discrepancy that you see in those two positions?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think he said that.

Q You mean you don't think Barkley said that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Maybe not. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, after your conference yesterday with the so-called Big Four, several of them made direct indication that there had been some discussion of the possibility of a special message to Congress from the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing in that. We talk about that every week.

Q It was merely an exploration of the possibility, rather than any decision to send a message.

THE PRESIDENT: We talk about a special message nearly every week. Sometimes they materialize and sometimes they don't. There is no -- no decision.

Q Nothing in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Your Congressman (Hamilton Fish, Republican, of New York) says you will declare a full emergency within this week.

THE PRESIDENT: Who told him?

Q I don't know. (the President laughs)

Q Mr. President, is Dakar still in the realm of amateur strategy?

THE PRESIDENT: Is what?

Q Is Dakar --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) (to the President) Dakar, Dakar.

Q (continuing) -- still in the realm of amateur strategy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I am rather looking for some people to put that in the same ironical -- or perhaps sarcastic -- category. There's a place called Ding Dong (Dong Dang, on the northeast border in French Indo-China) which was used in editorials all over the country, that we were going in opposition to -- that we were going to send an American expeditionary force to Ding Dong.

Q Ding Dong?

THE PRESIDENT: Dang, or Ding -- Dong.

VOICE: Dong Dang.

THE PRESIDENT: I had better look it up on the map. I guess most other people did.

Q Have you looked up Dakar?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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ESTABLISHING THE OFFICE OF CIVILIAN DEFENSE
IN THE OFFICE FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes, and in order to define further the functions and duties of the Office for Emergency Management of the Executive Office of the President in respect to the national emergency as declared by the President on September 8, 1939, to assure effective coordination of Federal relations with State and local governments engaged in defense activities, to provide for necessary cooperation with State and local governments in respect to measures for adequate protection of the civilian population in emergency periods, to facilitate constructive civilian participation in the defense program, and to sustain national morale, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. There is established within the Office for Emergency Management of the Executive Office of the President the Office of Civilian Defense, at the head of which shall be a Director appointed by the President. The Director shall discharge and perform his responsibilities and duties under the direction and supervision of the President. The Director shall receive no salary or other remuneration for his services, but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence, and other expenses incidental to the performance of his duties.

2. Subject to such policies, directions, and regulations as the President may from time to time prescribe, and with such advice and assistance as may be necessary from the other departments and agencies of the Federal Government, and utilizing the operating services and facilities of such departments and agencies as far as possible, the Director shall perform and discharge the following described duties and responsibilities:

a. Serve as the center for the coordination of Federal civilian defense activities which involve relationships between the Federal Government and State and local governments, territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia (as hereinafter used in this Order the term "State and local" shall include territories, insular possessions, and the District of Columbia); establish and maintain contact with State and local governments and their defense agencies; and facilitate relationships between such units of government and the agencies of the Federal Government in respect to defense problems.

b. Keep informed of problems which arise from the impact of the industrial and military defense effort upon local communities, and take necessary steps to secure the cooperation of appropriate Federal departments and agencies in dealing with such problems and in meeting the emergency needs of such communities.

c. Assist State and local governments in the establishment of State and local defense councils or other agencies designed to coordinate civilian defense activities.

d. With the assistance of the Board for Civilian Protection, described in paragraph 4 of this Order, study and plan measures designed to afford adequate protection of life and property in the event of emergency; and sponsor and carry out such civil defense programs, including the recruitment and training of civilian auxiliaries, and disseminate to appropriate officials of the Federal Government and State and local governments such information concerning civil defense measures as may be necessary to meet emergency needs.

e. With the assistance of the Volunteer Participation Committee, described in paragraph 5 of this Order, consider proposals, suggest plans, and promote activities designed to sustain the national morale and to provide opportunities for constructive civilian participation in the defense program; review and approve all civilian defense programs of Federal departments and agencies involving the use of volunteer services in order to assure unity and balance in the application of such programs; and assist State and local defense councils or other agencies in the organization of volunteer service units and in the development of their activities.

f. Maintain a clearing house of information on State and local defense activities in cooperation with appropriate Federal departments and agencies.

g. Review existing or proposed measures relating to or affecting State and local defense activities, and recommend such additional measures as may be necessary or desirable to assure adequate civilian defense.

h. Perform such other duties relating to participation in the defense program by State and local agencies as the President may from time to time prescribe.

3. The Director may provide for the internal organization and management of the Office of Civilian Defense. He shall obtain the President's approval for the establishment of the principal subdivisions of the Office and the appointment of the heads thereof.

4. There shall be in the Office of Civilian Defense a Board for Civilian Protection (hereinafter referred to as the Board) to be composed of the Director as Chairman and a representative of each of the following departments and agencies of the Federal Government to be designated by the heads thereof: Department of War, Department of the Navy, Department of Justice, Federal Security Agency, and such others as the President may from time to time determine. In addition, each of the following organizations shall be invited to designate a representative to serve as a member of the Board:

a. The Council of State Governments
b. The American Municipal Association
c. The United States Conference of Mayors

The Board shall advise and assist in the formulation of civil defense programs and measures, appropriate to the varying needs of each part of the Nation, designed to afford adequate protection of life and property in the event of emergency. The members of this Board shall serve as such without compensation, but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence, and other expenses incidental to the performance of their duties.

5. There shall be in the Office of Civilian Defense a Volunteer Participation Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) consisting of the Director as Chairman and not more than twenty members, representative of the various regions and interests of the Nation, to be appointed by the President. The Committee shall serve as an advisory and planning body in considering proposals and developing programs designed to sustain national morale and to provide opportunities for constructive civilian participation in the defense effort. The members of the Committee shall serve as such without compensation, but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence, and other expenses incidental to the performance of their duties.

6. The Director is authorized, with the approval of the President, to appoint such additional advisory committees and subcommittees, with respect to State and local cooperation, national morale, civil defense planning, civilian participation, and related defense activities, as he may find necessary or desirable to assist him in the performance of his duties. Such advisory committees may include representatives from Federal departments and agencies, State and local governments, private organizations, and the public at large. The members of advisory committees shall serve as such without compensation, but shall be entitled to actual and necessary transportation, subsistence, and other expenses incidental to the performance of their duties.

7. Within the limitation of such funds as may be appropriated to the Office of Civilian Defense, or as may be allocated to it by the President through the Bureau of the Budget, the Director may employ necessary personnel and make provision for the necessary supplies, facilities, and services. However, the Office of Civilian Defense shall use such statistical, informational, fiscal, personnel, and other general business services and facilities as may be made available to it through the Office for Emergency Management or other agencies of the Government.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

May 20, 1941.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #743,
Executive Office of the President,
May 23, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve, (Mr. Early) have you got anything for me?

MR. EARLY: No, sir; we are dry -- blank.

THE PRESIDENT: Right, Charlie.

THE PRESIDENT: (turning to gentlemen seated in chairs behind him)

Rail birds! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I hear a lot of gals are coming in. Who is the man to accompany the ladies?

Q Charlie is an escort, you know.

MR. GODWIN: That's a convoy. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: A convoy! (he laughs)

Q Are you a Destroyer? (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: No, no; I'm a little antiquated.

Q He is in the capital ship class. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you implying that he (Mr. Godwin) looks like a blimp? (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: No.

MISS CRAIG: Nobody would ever sink me without a trace.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS CRAIG: Nobody would ever sink me without a trace.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Where's Steve? (Mr. Early) (To Mr. Early in a low voice): What date was that report due to Congress -- tenth of June -- I think so.

MR. EARLY: Ninety days. It's being prepared for you.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, tenth or eleventh.

MR. GODWIN: It's going to be good and short today.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he say "All in"?

Steve (Mr. Early) says he hasn't got anything except a report that he checked up on that Lend-lease responsibility of his and that he thinks the date is somewhere around the tenth or eleventh of June, on which a report is due to go to Congress, and it will be made, on or before that date.

Q Mr. President, from reading the newspapers one gathers the impression that some consideration is being given to possible change in the Neutrality Act.

THE PRESIDENT: I only know what I read in the newspapers.

Q Do you believe them, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you believe what you read in the newspapers?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends a little bit on the writer. (laughter)

Q Well, there are two Cabinet officers who have said they consider it a blunder and would like to have it ---

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think they have. One of them said that he had been misquoted.

MR. GODWIN: He was very heavily misquoted then. (laughter)

Q What did the other one say?

THE PRESIDENT: What? I didn't ask the other one. He would have said the same thing.

Q Mr. President, may we ask you directly, sir, do you feel that the Neutrality Act might interfere with delivering the goods to

Great Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: I have absolutely no news on it at all, except what I read in the papers.

Q Mr. President, about four months ago you were handed, according to a rumor, a report on defense highways, and according to rumor it was referred to Mr. Elliott in the National Resources Planning Commission -- Board. Also, according to rumor, it is supposed to be somewhere between downtown and the Capitol, but it has not arrived at the Capitol or downtown. Can you say what is being done about that matter?

THE PRESIDENT: No, as far as I am concerned I don't know where it is either.

Q Well, do you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Except that I suppose -- my impression -- you had better check on this -- I may be entirely wrong -- is that a certain amount of estimates were approved, or are about to be approved.

Q The remaining seven million?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you, but it is somewhat less than people thought.

Q Well, is there something likely to happen soon in the way ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, yes; but these would be primarily the necessary excess roads to new plants, or new camps, and even those plants would be very greatly cut. Instead of building two or three roads to a plant, or a camp, we would cut it to about one road.

Q Do you have the over-all idea?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't remember the figures at all. It is a little less than was recommended.

Q Was it four and a half or five hundred million?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing like that. Nothing like that.

Q Do you happen to know, sir, if an approved road between Baltimore and Washington is included?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, is there ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I shouldn't think that that was a great essential. Why should it be?

Q Is there certain data that has to be withheld in your report to Congress, because of military secrets, or can you make a full report?

THE PRESIDENT: Details to be withheld, yes, not the totals -- not the sums involved.

Q For instance, bombers, you could give the exact number of bombers?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Probably give the totals on plants, not bombers.

Q Mr. President, would you care to say whether you think the French situation has improved as a result of the recent statement of Vichy spokesmen?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't care to say.

Q Is it possible to give a preview of your June ten report?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The June ten report, of course, would be up the tenth of June. I don't know what would come up, because it takes some time to collect all the figures.

Q I mean anything ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) No, I don't know. The actual report, I

suppose, would take in all the allocations up to -- Oh, what? -- say the 20th of May, somewhere along there --that is about the latest date that we could collect the materials -- the figures.

Q Mr. President, would you care to say what you are going to do on the 85% Parity bill?

THE PRESIDENT: It hasn't come to me yet. They say that -- Rudolph (Rudolph Forster) I think has got it, but it hasn't got over -- way across from Rudolph to me. It may be in this afternoon.

Q Mr. President, this is not national defense, but have you acted on that Supreme Court judge in Puerto Rico yet? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, and Secretary Ickes lunched with me and he didn't mention it. (more laughter)

Q What about the Supreme Court of the United States? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing -- he didn't mention it. (loud laughter)

Q Is he one of your consultants?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure.

Q Mr. President, have you had any report about this threatened strike of the North American Aviation plant?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q It was supposed to be certified last night to the Mediation Board, but nobody that I can reach in the Mediation Board ever heard about it.

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard about it.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Knudsen said this morning, when he left the conference with you, that plans for the proposed new set of steel plants on the west coast would not be accepted, that some other means of expanding steel capacity would be used. Could you give us

some background on that situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there isn't any, except the thing is being held in abeyance at the present time until we get a little better picture of future needs. Nothing has been turned down or accepted.

Q You say nothing has been turned down?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing has been turned down, and nothing has been accepted.

Q Does that mean you are awaiting the new Dunn report?

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of the elements, but only one of the elements. We are also awaiting new 'need' reports.

Q Mr. President, now that you have a new agreement with Canada on the Niagara Falls power about to be sent up to the Capitol, can you talk about it today?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Right there in the basket. (pointing)

Q Do you mind if I look at it? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, we are monopolizing things over here, I am afraid. Would you go back to the time when you spoke about the desire of extending west coast industry -- for the steel industry. Do you recall a year or two ago you said you were considering that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, still very, very keen about it, and a great deal has been accomplished, especially, of course, on aluminum and on magnesium, and there have been extensions made, already authorized, only they are existing steel plants, not west coast new plants, but extensions of new plants. When we come to new plants it is in abeyance.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q How much of an extension of existing plants is under way?

THE PRESIDENT: Which one?

Q The existing steel plants.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what proportion of the Lend-lease appropriation has been issued?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I haven't got my figures.

Q Sir, could you tell us how the general European situation looks to you at present?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, there are a lot of rumors going around about peace moves. Have you heard of anything?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox in a speech this afternoon said that unless there is a sudden change, this generation is going to be called upon for sacrifices as great as any previous American generation has made. Could you go into any detail as to what the nature of those sacrifices might be?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you might have to go into the Army and Navy. (laughter)

Q Just one at a time.

Q Mr. President, have you received any reports from London about the Hess affair that you could tell us about?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the apparent unanimity of the people in approving the Selective Service laws?

THE PRESIDENT: Apparent what?

Q Unanimity; with 93% of the people who thought it was a good idea.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it is very satisfactory to have such a high percentage. (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (as newspapermen file out of room) I hope you will have a peaceful week end.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #744,
Executive Office of the President,
May 23, 1941 -- 4.30 P.M., E.S.T.

(This Press Conference was held especially for editors of business magazines and papers. All present were introduced individually by Paul Wooton, Secretary, White House Correspondents' Association, and shook hands with the President.)

THE PRESIDENT: For the presidency of the United States Chamber of Commerce, or the National Association of Manufacturers! Now there he is, right here -- (indicating Paul Wooton) (warm applause)

MR. WOOTON: Mr. President, I think after eight years you should not be in my favor. I have attended seven hundred of your Press Conferences.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you want to ask questions about foreign affairs, like the front row?

MR. WOOTON: No, I keep out of that.

Mr. President, I thought that since you have this group here, and behind these men are several hundred thousands of readers, that you might like to say just the sort of editorial they could write, or what kind of an article they might run, that would be most helpful in forwarding the defense program. They are all anxious to do something constructive, and they go to the key men in industry in the papers, and if you have any thought at all that would be helpful along that line, I know they would appreciate it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I tell you, on the -- on the writing of the editorial end, the public as a whole -- the business public -- I think you can't overstress the seriousness of the present situation. I think it does need stressing, because we all know that this world situation, if it goes the wrong way -- the axis powers win -- it is going to hit business far more than any one thing that has ever hit them. It will hit them far worse than a mere ending of all of these emergency orders, because it will mean that you will get 'put in a vice', not by our own volition, or the volition of all the Democratic nations that have an economy that is somewhat similar to ours. We will get 'put in a vice', a 'strait jacket', by the axis powers; and I don't think that this seriousness of that situation can be underestimated. I think it ought to be played up all the time. And furthermore, that if we are going to meet the situation as it develops, and as it is becoming increasingly serious, that we have got to quit all this silly business of "business as usual." The nations that are actually at war certainly are not conducting "business as usual", and the more we help to defeat the control of the world by dictatorships, the less "business as usual" we are going to have.

It means giving up, of course, on the part of the American public, and therefore of the manufacturers of the country -- the businessmen of the country -- a great many things which were all very nice and pleasant in our normal lives, and substitute for them the things that are necessary to carry on this aid to the Democracies that we are giving at the present time.

Well, it is going to hit a lot of people, sure, but you can't eat your cake and have it too. That is the one, the one message to give to the American people: "You can't eat your cake and have it too." (emphasizing) If you do one thing you have got to go all out for it. If you are going to do the other thing -- lie down and take it on the chin -- it will be putting us in a strait jacket that we won't get out of for one hundred years. I think that should be told quite frankly to the public.

Er -- after all, the country can get on without a great many things that it uses normally. Is it worthwhile to give up certain things in order to carry through an effort to survive, or isn't it? I am -- for instance -- of course, we know in the country -- we know that there is a very great lack of understanding at the present time of the seriousness of the world situation as it affects us. You take, for example, -- for instance -- the -- a great deal of this perfectly well-intended publicity has been stupid. I begged them when they started the so-called Aid to Britain movement -- I said, "You know there are an awful lot of people in this country that don't personally 'give a continental' about Aid to Britain, but on the other hand, if you tell the whole sentence you get people to understand."

What is the whole sentence? "America First Through Aid to Britain." Now that's a very different thing that tells the truth. You are not working for America first because England today is holding the line and is doing practically all the fighting. Now the real sentence is, "Let us keep American going by giving aid to Britain while we are arming ourselves," and that is the thought

to get across. And I think you can all help tremendously to make people realize the seriousness of the situation, and eliminate a lot of the perfectly silly prejudices that exist today because of wrong slogans -- literally, the wrong slogans.

I suppose, for example, that if there is any person in the United States who happens to be the leader of the America First movement, it is the unfortunate fellow who happens to have the responsibility -- who happens to be President of the United States. He is the leader of the America First movement. Now these other fellows jumped, and nobody's printed the fact that they have grabbed off something that does not belong to them. There's a whole lot in that. I am just talking ordinary, old-fashioned common sense.

Of course, -- well, of course, one of the things we don't talk about an awful lot -- we come into the question of profits, rates of profit, rates of taxation, and so forth and so on. Well, you have got a simple answer on that. We are all pretty well agreed that these are times not to make large profits, and we have to go back in working things like that out. We have a curious situation. I notice one or two -- the best friends that I have in the world -- are very large stockholders, and I will give you the illustration -- the Coca Cola Company. There are some of the original people that went in, and they went in what to them was an awful lot of capital -- ten thousand dollars -- and today on that original investment of ten thousand dollars -- figure out the percentage on that investment that they are getting in the way of dividends. And yet, under the present tax laws -- mind you, that

happens to be, of course, one shining example under the present tax law -- Coca Cola -- you take the everage they would get during the previous five years. They don't pay any excess taxes on -- what? -- a thousand percent of profit, yet that is an awfully big profit on an original amount of capital that you put in.

On the other hand, you take some other organization like -- oh, what? -- United States Steel. Er -- taking it over a period of ten years the yield to the individual who bought United States Steel common is not high, while they are hit today because the average of their earnings this year is way ahead over the average -- above the average of the last five years. They are paying enormous excess profits, but it -- and it is hitting the fellow who made the investment in United States Steel. He is lucky if on the average of the past ten years he has made four or five percent on his money. Those are things that we have got, I think -- there is another subject for an editorial -- which are perfectly legitimate and nobody takes note, but it would be funny to have some of your humorists -- you all have them on your papers -- (laughter)

Q In a business press?

THE PRESIDENT: You have all got humorists.

Q Even in our business press.

Q Unconscious humorists.

THE PRESIDENT: Write a piece on the people who have appeared before Bob Doughton's Committee, (Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives) the chewing tobacco people, (laughter) and -- oh, what? -- the cosmetics people, and so forth and so on, who are weeping bitter tears, and getting the whole Committee weeping with

them. The most amazing thing that has ever happened. Now, it is perfectly all right for them to have their little speech, and pull the tears out of the Committee's eyes, but in the last analysis it is a subject for humorists' treatment, isn't it?

MR. WOOTON: It certainly is. We had a session with Jere Cooper (on the sub-Committee of Internal Revenue of the Ways and Means Committee) this morning and he touched on that same thing.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a whole lot in it. Everybody's for free speech. It is fine for them to go up there. Let's smile occasionally!

MR. WOOTON: That's right; that's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Well I think -- I think that, taking it by and large, that a lot of the -- the business papers -- business as a whole is going along awfully well in this whole thing, and we are having very, very few complaints.

I was talking the other day to one of those people who had been during -- in the old days -- er -- largely responsible for the great effort of 1917 and 1918, and there were three of the fairly top people who were running the production -- the war production of the country, which began, mind you, not until the day we got into the war in 1917. There had been a certain amount done in the way of orders from the -- from the British and the French before we got into the war, but the great volume of orders came after we got into the war with no preparation for it. To these three people I asked the straight question: "How does the speed of our present production effort, on a relative basis, compare with the speed -- and we have been going now for a year --

compare with the speed from the 6th of April, 1917, to the 6th of April, 1918?" And all three of them -- although they are not, in this particular year, responsible for this thing, and they were then -- all three of them said, "You are way ahead of what had been done in the first year of the World War." I said, "How far?" And they said -- I think about -- they agreed about three months ahead in the first twelve months of effort. Well, now, that is quite a record to have that admitted by three fellows who were responsible for the 1917 war. (meaning war effort)

MR. WOOTON: It certainly is.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is a pretty good -- a pretty good compliment to pay to American business. I really do.

MR. WOOTON: And that is the text of these editorials that industry by and large is doing --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

MR. WOOTON: -- a breath-taking job.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. Of course, there are an awful lot of things that -- oh, what will I say? -- interpretative writers -- some people call them -- columnists some people call them. (laughter) They are not fair to business, not fair to government, either one. I will give you a very good example.

Somebody came out the other day -- it makes no difference who it is -- it is perfectly terrible -- er -- we are way behind on tanks, way behind, where we ought to be on the production of tanks. And look at this thing! Tanks are needed. They are needed by the British in Egypt, in England, all over the place. We need them also, and yet we are way, way behind. We have only

just begun turning out a few tanks. Of course, it did not tell the real story, the real story on tanks -- mind you -- that is the trouble -- most of these fellows are right -- they just get told one little thing and they don't know all the background. It is not their fault. They put the thing down on paper without checking.

Now, on tanks, what happened? Last year, about last summer, from about the end of May on up to July, when they were working out the priorities, that is to say, the classification that these orders would go into, we needed to make four main divisions of production. One was airplanes, of course, and another was guns -- anti-tank guns and all other kinds of guns. A third was ammunition -- I would say powder and shot and shell. And the fourth was tanks. And we couldn't give an A-1 priority to all four groups because it would have slowed up the whole program group if we had given equal priority to all four groups.

So the military people were called in, and the British were called in, and we said to them, from the production point of view, one at least of these groups has got to be put in the second -- the second category. Now, we fellows were laymen -- businessmen -- and the Army and the Navy and the British said, "Well, about the last thing we need today is tanks." (he laughs) They didn't see the need at that time for tanks. Now, that is the best possible opinion that we could get, so out of those four groups we put the tank group into the second priority category -- deliverately -- on military advice -- which we have to go on. Now, of course, everybody is cussing out the tank manufacturers, and

cussing out the Government for being behind.

Well, that is just an illustration of how you have to know all of the surrounding facts before you can write intelligently on some particular thing that you hear. I think it is probably a good illustration.

MR. WOOTON: It certainly is. Well, Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) As you know, if there is anything you want to know about -- if it isn't highly confidential -- we have to keep things -- some things, as I said in the Press Conference today -- when I make the report on the Lend-lease Bill on the allocations of money, I will -- I will use fairly large sized categories, but I cannot break it down. For -- for example, in American production of airplanes for the -- for the British, I will probably give the total number of dollars that have been allocated to airplanes, but I won't be able, for military reasons, to break it down, say X number of bombers and X number of training planes, and X number of pursuit ships. I mean, I shall not be able -- I think it wise -- to give the total of planes. I can give the total number of dollars.

MR. WOOTON: That's right. Well, Mr. President, I think --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It's good to see you all.

MR. WOOTON: I think it's mighty fine of you to see us, and in behalf of these editors, I thank you very, very much.

THE PRESIDENT: If there's anything we can do to help, let us know.

MR. WOOTON: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #745,
Executive Office of the President,
May 28, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M., E.S.T.

(Press Conference normally held on May 27 was held today instead.)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got one or two matters here. Steve (Mr. Early) will give you a release on this. The -- I have signed a Joint Resolution of Congress authorizing an extension of the control of exports and strategic and critical articles and materials to the Philippine Islands. And then I have also signed the Proclamation putting this into effect. Then, in order to save time and trouble -- er -- licenses will be issued in the Philippine Islands by the High Commissioner acting on behalf of the Secretary of State. And since there is no District Court of the United States in the Philippines, jurisdiction of offenses committed in the Philippines, in violation of the Export Control Act, has been conferred on the Philippine courts.

Then I got this morning the second report -- three months -- of the first report from Mr. Gano Dunn on the steel -- Adequacy of the Steel Industry. Copies of this report and summaries of same will be available to the Press at the office of Mr. Tom Wilson, Room 5525, New Social Security Board Building at Fourth and Maryland Avenue. Then there is a summary here on this report -- the highlights. I will try and summarize the summary.

Prospective deficits in Great Lakes transportation capacity, blast furnace capacity and coke oven capacity that were forecast

in the first report as likely to be developed by the end of the present calendar year, have been voided by action of the industry to bring its production facilities into full balance. That means that there -- I take it they are -- er -- getting more steel out of the Bessemer process than coke oven and technical things of that kind.

Secondly, maximum reliable capacity of the industry that was first estimated in the first report at 91,124,000 tons has been increased to 91,338,000 tons, and further increases are in prospect. The creation of the Government-Industry Committees, now in process of formation, promises to increase greatly the effective cooperation of industry at maximum levels, by bringing about more even loading of the various steel companies through re-allocation of industry and fully utilizing certain less efficient capacity that is not now in full use. The passage of the Lend-lease Act, and further increases in the defense program, have caused sharp upward revisions of the estimated requirements for steel, both for military and civilian uses.

As a result of the increased demands, the second report -- this one -- represents a deficit -- prospective deficit -- of 1,400,000 tons of steel for the calendar year 1941, as compared with a surplus -- estimated surplus -- of 10,000,000 tons in the first report, and a deficit of 6,000,000 tons for the calendar year 1942, as compared with a surplus of 2,000,000 tons in the first report. Such deficits would not affect the ability of the industry to meet all defense needs, since the total Army, Navy and Maritime Commission, and British requirements do not

amount -- these are war requirements of all kinds -- to more than 25% of the total capacity of the industry.

The -- we are therefore studying what should be done, whether to make a further curtailment in civilian consumption -- that means taking it out of 75% of steel that is used in civilian requirements, or to increase the capacity of the industry. Mr. Dunn points out, however, that in increasing the capacity of the industry -- if, for example, we want to increase steel production capacity by 10,000,000 tons, it would take over 4,000,000 tons of steel to increase the capacity. And he used a rather nice simile on that.

He reminded me of the story in Mark Twain -- I think it was Huck Finn (Huckleberry Finn) -- and there was a great rivalry on the Mississippi River, in the old days, about which boat had the loudest whistle. And there was one boat that was built that took all the prizes, up and down the river, for the loudest whistle. The only trouble was that when the ship whistled she had to stop because the whistle took all the steam. (laughter)

And, of course, that is a matter for practical decision, as to whether we do want to use 4,000,000 tons out of present very much needed capacity in order to get 10,000,000 tons increased capacity two years from now. That is just one of those decisions that has to be made from the practical angle. Of course, the other -- the other way out, as I indicated, is that out of the 75% -- over 75% of steel production that is now going to purely civilian uses, -- whether it is not possible to get further allocations for military and naval needs out of that, without any

very serious hardship to civilian use of steel.

Q Mr. President, does that indicate that priorities will be extended, since there is a shortage?

THE PRESIDENT: If we did that, yes.

Q Well, we couldn't expand for two years ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We could not expand for two years, according to that report.

THE PRESIDENT: Practically not. Construction. Production of steel -- takes pretty close to two years to build.

Q Mr. President, did Mr. Gano (Gano Dunn, Office of Production Management) take into account the reductions in civilian production that already have been ordered -- automobiles, for example?

THE PRESIDENT: In automobiles it has, as you know.

Q That is all figured out on those, and still have the deficit? That is, it would have to be a great deal ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think -- I don't know -- I couldn't tell you, because I haven't read that part of the report, whether the automobile reduction has been figured into this report or not.

Q Mr. President, has any decision been made on the Kaiser proposal for the West Coast in this report?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They wouldn't come into it.

Q Mr. President, has the Irish Government accepted your offer of two ships, and five hundred thousand dollars worth of food, for relief of the civilian population there?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I think you had probably better check Mr. Davis. (Norman H. Davis, Chairman, American Red Cross (?) Have you heard anything, Steve? (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: The Irish Minister is ill, Mr. President, but to date they haven't heard. (Robert Brennan is Irish Minister)

MR. PAUL BRANDT: Mr. President, last night you said that the 1917 convoy method is outmoded. Can you explain how the newer method is more effective?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think probably that was explained last night, Pete. As you know, I mentioned other elements which came into the dangers of ocean shipping at the present time, not just the submarine, but an improved submarine, and the raider, and the aircraft. Understand, of course, the old convoy method didn't have those three things to contend with.

Q You think it would be more than a patrol?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that would be quite comparable in any way, as you know if you read last night's speech. It is to our -- er -- is a part of our policy to be quite certain, so far as we possibly can, for our patrols to know where any German submarine, plane or raider is on the ocean at any given time. Of course, you can't do it one hundred percent, but it is getting more and more effective every day.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us how you expect to act in regard to fifth column activities under your emergency proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose go on the way we are doing. Tighten up all we can.

Q Will you take any new steps?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, you said that -- that labor and capital's desires should not be allowed to stand in the way of defense production.

In a situation like the coal strike, do you -- prospective coal strike -- would you favor any proposal submitted to offset that?

THE PRESIDENT: That is an awfully "iffy" question. We'll have to treat it as such.

Q Mr. President, following that same line, do you propose any direct steps to implement the labor objectives you set forth in that speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think that is pretty clear, what the present labor objectives are. Of course, if they don't work out, then you have to do something else. (he laughs)

Q That would infer, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That's about all you can say.

Q Some positive action if they would not respect them?

THE PRESIDENT: Some action would have to be taken.

Q Do you see the need ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't say that by way of threat in any way, but of course it is perfectly obvious what the objective is, and as long as it is the Government objective under an emergency, it is the duty of the Government to continue to work toward the objective, which is production.

Q Mr. President, have your studies indicated whether or not you can implement the present machinery with the authority you have now, or whether you will need any legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't studied it.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q Do you see any further need of extending the patrol -- the Atlantic

Patrol?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is like asking me where Destroyer 446 is at the present time. What is her latitude and longitude. I am not going to tell you, even if I do know. I don't happen to know. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, how is the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, that is a matter -- purely a military and naval matter.

Q How is the selectee affected by the terms of the proclamation of national emergency? Is he in for the duration of the ---

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. No. You are just letting your imagination run away with you. The proclamation of national emergency requires implementing by Executive Orders, or other forms of orders, and none have been issued.

Q The reason I asked that, sir, is that at Fort Dix this afternoon General Powell, in command, stated to the 44th Division, in which there were six thousand selectees, that under the terms of the emergency proclamation they could consider themselves in there, quote, "to an unlimited tenure of office."

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would like to check up on that statement before -- I am not sure that your quotation is accurate. I am not the least certain that the quotation is accurate.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us what the basis of your powers in declaring the national emergency are? Are they Constitutional or specific statutes?

THE PRESIDENT: Both Constitutional, and Supreme Court,and legislative. I have forgotten how many different acts there are. There are about --

oh, there are about eight pages of titles of acts which are on the statute books. Some of them date back to -- well, I won't say the Civil War, because I don't know, but some of them date back to the time of the Spanish War where there is legislative reference -- not actual laws which were still on the statute books -- to a national emergency proclaimed by the President. In other words, a full recognition of the power to declare a national emergency by many Congresses of the United States.

Q Mr. President, yesterday some of the dispatches said that the ship which found the Bismarck was American made, and also that the ship was American owned. Can you tell us which is correct?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it was a ship which was a modification of one of our Navy long-range patrol bombers, which was sold -- bought by the British from the manufacturer some time ago. How long this ship had actually been in England, I don't know. It was manned, operated and owned by the British.

Q Mr. President, from what you have said about the national emergency, is it true then that the powers you now have, through the proclamation of this emergency are the additional powers -- are merely those powers signed in these various legislative acts through the years?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the only way I can answer you that -- the trouble is you are trying to be too specific. In 1933, we had, as I remember it, an emergency in this country -- a national emergency. We could not get any money out of any banks. We couldn't pay our hotel bills. In a bad way. Well, at that particular time there was a national emergency, and nobody raised any question about it.

It happened to be a domestic matter, a money matter, and we had a national emergency then, and we got out of it. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, do you plan any immediate change in international broadcasting, or communications?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't quite get it. (meaning not hearing)

Q Well, under your emergency powers ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the President) He means taking over communications.

THE PRESIDENT: Ask Mark Ethridge. (General Manager, Louisville Times)

Q What?

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you regard any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Ask Mark Ethridge, and Fly (James L. Fly, Chairman, F.C.C.) and Harry Butcher (Vice President, Columbia Broadcasting System) and some of the other fellows. I haven't heard of any. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, I am sorry, I did not remember that that was included in that analysis that Bob Jackson (Robert Jackson, Attorney General) made some time ago. Was it included in that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. I think that has become law.

Q Those items in the Attorney General's list of powers inherent in the President under all of these acts, they don't -- you don't go to work on them until you issue a proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right, that's right.

Q Do you plan such proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on how many you would include in a given order. I haven't got anything in prospect.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, that means that there will be no exercise of authority under the new declaration of unlimited emergency, except as you issue specific orders defining the new application?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right, that's right.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q How can you back up with action a re-assertion of the right of freedom of the seas under the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think it will tie in all right.

Q We ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't think there is anything ---

Q (continuing) We asserted that right in the Neutrality Act, didn't we? And we decided to let it slip for a while?

THE PRESIDENT: If you remember the Neutrality Act, there was a rather definite intent in the whole thing. The first was the embargo clause, or embargo clauses, which were later repealed. The other was the desire and intent of the Congress at that time to prevent any American flag -- merchant ships with American crews, what they call documented ships -- from going into certain defined war zones, to be defined by Presidential proclamation. That is about all there was.

Q Will the Act itself prevent these ships from calling at neutral ports?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will the Act itself prevent these ships from calling at neutral -- I mean belligerent ports? I beg your pardon.

THE PRESIDENT: Those are documented ships; yes.

Q Well, now, is it anticipated that those ships will re-enter the trade generally?

THE PRESIDENT: Into the war zone?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that would be a violation of the Act.

Q Then how can we have freedom of the seas, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: You can limit freedom of the seas by saying that they can't go to some particular port, where on the doctrine of chance they will be destroyed.

Q Mr. President, in view ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) A little bit like the old question of 'what is a blockade'. Is it a paper blockade, or a blockade that you can't get through? We always claimed in the Civil War that blockade of the Southern ports was effective, and the British claimed that it was not, because an occasional blockade-runner did get through the blockade. Well, on the figures of the blockade, we were, as I remember it -- taking the Southern ports as a whole -- we were catching about three-quarters of all the attempts to run the blockade, in or out, and only about one-quarter of the blockade-runners were getting in or out; and on that basis we claimed that it was effective.

Q Mr. President, in view of the emergency, can you tell us whether you contemplate any further action to curb the export of oil and other war materials to Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not, at the present time.

Q Mr. President, may we take it then that you do not for the moment intend to ask for a repeal of the remaining part of the Neutrality

Act?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can assume that.

Q Do you feel that you have all the power you need to see that our war supplies get to Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, you mentioned last night in your speech that other steps to curb the delay of supplies to Britain were under study by you and your naval aides. Can you indicate ---

THE PRESIDENT: That is just what Hitler wants to know. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, some of us over here (meaning in their part of the room) failed to catch the question on the Neutrality Act as to whether it was intended to have it repealed.

THE PRESIDENT: Whether you can assume -- whether I will ask for the repeal of what is left of the Neutrality Act? I said I thought it was a pretty good assumption.

Q That you are?

THE PRESIDENT: That I am <u>not</u> going to. (laughter)

Q That is the way it came out the first time.

Q Would you care to define those provisions of the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think you are coming down to -- well, to use a polite word -- refinements. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) No, as a matter of fact I am not considering anything at the present time in regard to the Neutrality Act. Now, that is the simplest way of putting it.

Q Is there enough available tonnage to get these vital supplies to Great Britain, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you heard what I said last night. Now, if you ask me how much is left, that is the thing that I am not going to tell you, because that is something that Hitler would like to know too.

Q Mr. President, could we have a direct quote on that statement on the --

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A direct quote ---

THE PRESIDENT: No; I don't think it is worth it.

Q You said there were some eight pages of statutes that confer upon you various powers in an emergency. Could we possibly obtain access to these eight pages?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because you might misconstrue them. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us if naval patrol ships have been ordered to resort to any new measures, as yet, beyond signalling?

THE PRESIDENT: That is the one thing Hitler wants to know.

Q Mr. President, are we to assume from these answers that all of the steps you may take from now on of a naval and military character are secret?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't say everything, because I would say that I have answered directly, without using that method, about three-quarters of all the questions you have asked today. There are some things that obviously I am not going to tell you about, and you will get accustomed to not asking them after a while. (laughter)

Q No, we won't.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #746,
Executive Office of the President,
June 3, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M., E.S.T.

Miss May Craig handed a book (CHILE, LAND OF PROGRESS, by Earl P. Hanson) to the President, who thought Earl Godwin had written it.

MISS CRAIG: I was asked to present it to you.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it interesting? (looking through the book)

MISS CRAIG: I have just read the first chapter. It's -- it's quite interesting to me. Maybe you already know all of it.

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so.

MISS CRAIG: Read the inscription, Mr. President. Further, towards the front. (the President continues to look through the book)

MISS CRAIG: Mr. President, Mr. President, turn back to page two, and read the inscription from the author to you.

MR. GODWIN: A little further.

MISS CRAIG: There.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Very nice.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: (turning to Mr. Hassett behind him) Anybody got any news? No news? Mr. Hassett says we have no news.

Q Is there something you can tell us, sir, about the report that Mr. Winant has made to you?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it has begun. He is giving me some more tomorrow.

Q Mr. President, is he giving you any further information about this Hess affair?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q The Hess affair.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought I just said that I did not have anything because he has not finished talking to me.

Q Mr. President, could you just say whether you asked him to come home, or whether he came on his own initiative?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I couldn't tell you. It's nobody's business.

Q What time do you expect to see him tomorrow, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, is Mr. Cohen going to stay in America, or is he going back?

THE PRESIDENT: Going back, I think.

Q Mr. President, this is just for the record. When can we expect any news on the Chief Justiceship?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Does that answer apply also to the Associate Justice?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Did you hold off on one before the other?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Did you hold off on one before the other?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think it was probably just as much a surprise to me last night as it was to anybody else. I had no idea of it at all.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, in the dearth of live important news, I have been trying for a month to find a spot where I could ask you a local question. (laughter) Mr. Young, Commissioner of the District of Columbia, is very much impressed with the red, white and blue automobile tags for District automobilists, and the

Budget Bureau says they can't have them.

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

MR. GODWIN: He says the Federal Government should have a red, white and blue tag, and I wonder, seriously, whether they had come to you about it. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, it hasn't, and by the way, your bringing up that tag question reminds me -- there has been an awful lot of -- not you people -- but columnists lately, who have been writing about how over-burdened I was with details, et cetera. Well, we have got things -- this is just for general information -- it is off the record -- off the record entirely -- but we are -- just for our own family information -- I have got things so -- what shall I say? decentralized -- I have forgotten what the columnists' word is for it -- it is something fancy -- today -- that I am doing actually less paper work than I have done at any time in eight years. I am having fewer things to decide -- such as red, white and blue tags in the District -- at the present time, than I have had in eight years. In other words -- I know -- 'delegation of authority' -- that's what they (the columnists) use. Well, there is more of it being delegated now than at any time in eight years, and the reason is that -- I should say that such decisions as do come necessarily to the President are much smaller in number than before and receive -- well, they have always had fairly prompt action, as you know -- they are receiving even prompter action. So it is just -- just one of those slants that people take when they have to write something every day, that it just happens -- I just thought I would let you know.

Q Can I ask a local question too, if you want to answer, Mr. President, as to the staggering of pay days here?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't heard about it.

Q I understand it had been brought to your attention.

THE PRESIDENT: I think those things are largely a matter of what is best, also the convenience of peoples, or government employees.

Q Mr. -- Mr. President, in a bill that the War Department sent up to Congress, they asked for the power to -- in case of necessity -- to take over the property, the difference seeming to be previously permanently. Could you explain to us, sir, whether the power to take over permanently was put in?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know anything about it. Don't say I know nothing about that though.

MR. JAY FRANKLIN: Mr. President, returning to the remarks about your duties, why should they necessarily be off the record? Why can't they be used?

THE PRESIDENT: Use what?

MR. JAY FRANKLIN: Why would you say that's off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: I tell you what I would do. I would have said it for the personal information of columnists, Jay. (Jay Franklin, Bell Syndicate) Now that is a new way of putting it.

MR. GODWIN: He is a columnist.

THE PRESIDENT: I know he is. That's why I said it. (laughter)

Q Well, Mr. President ---

MR. JAY FRANKLIN: (interposing) The only point is that it seemed to be a very interesting piece of news.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think so. Oh, no, I never -- I never handle

columnists as news. (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Now you brought that on yourself, Jay. (he laughs)

Q Well, Mr. President, I brought you back to discuss local things. There has been no ---

THE PRESIDENT: Did you say local things?

Q Oh, no, it's national in character. I said I brought you back to discuss local things. There has been no Marshal in the Southern District of New York for a year. Is there going to be an appointment of any for this year, do you know?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It has been a headache for a year.

Q I know it has. Now you spoke of decentralization of duties.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I suppose it comes up about once a month, and I send it over to the New York Senators -- Eddie Flynn -- and before that to Jim Farley.

Q Mr. LaGuardia also?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. Anybody that wants to take a whack. (laughter)

Q Well, that version has not been sent yet.

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q When will it be sent from ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You will have to ask all of these people that I have told you. I am trying to get an agreement.

Q Mr. President, I want to ask a local question.

Q Who would be a good source of information on these matters of 'delegated authority'?

THE PRESIDENT: The people to whom they are delegated.

Q Could you enumerate them?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, take the Congressional Record -- I mean the Directory -- everybody in it. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, I would like to ask a local question. It has been a long time since I said anything about Passamaquoddy. (laughter) Now that the drought has caused a dearth of power from rivers, are you considering the revival of the tidal project?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you are too young to remember, but even in prohibition days in Maine we never had a drought up there. (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, did I understand you correctly to say you didn't know about this bill -- the War Department bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't read it. I haven't read it. I couldn't talk to you about the language.

Q Do you approve in principle? They announced that it had White House approval.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the origin of it was -- like in the language of the old -- and I am merely telling you in general -- general idea -- in last year's -- last fall's bill there was a provision, if you remember, that allowed the Government to take over a plant in case of refusal -- I think it used the word refusal -- to carry out the Government order, and then came that problem of the Allis-Chalmers strike. Well, the strikers said they were willing to go back to work <u>if</u>, and the company said they were willing to deliver <u>if</u>. So in a technical, legal sense that did not amount to, I suppose, a refusal, and they wanted some kind of authority to take over various kinds of situations where the Government was not

getting its goods delivered, or manufactured. Now, whether the enlargement should use the word "failure" or "inability" or something of that kind, I don't know. And as I said, I haven't seen the language of the bill, but the bill was intended to get deliveries where under the present law there is some cloud in the actual language.

Q Would you say then the prime objective of this was less disputes ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) To get deliveries -- defense orders.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether Britain's present position in the Mediterranean calls for any increase in our present flow of supplies with the necessity of speeding up?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. No.

Q Mr. President, has the Deputy Coordinator of petroleum been selected yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Is there to be one?

Q Yes, sir.

MR. GODWIN: Several.

Q Mr. President, in that property bill it goes much further than the point that you just mentioned. It carries authority to requisition patents, tangible property, intangible property, and a good many other things. Was that included in the endorsement that you gave of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It depends entirely on what the definition of <u>property</u> is. Your own brain -- your own brain -- is property. I don't know whether I could requisition it or not. I mean, you are talking intangibles now, as they say. I couldn't tell you.

Q Mr. President, have you made any decision with respect to the status

of Mr. Budd in the transportation setup?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, is there any comment you could make about your conversation with Admiral King today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Just the usual checkup. I suppose we will have them every few weeks, whenever he happens to be down here.

Q Could you tell us how the Atlantic patrol is coming along?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could you tell us how the Atlantic patrol is coming along?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, any Executive Orders in sight under the emergency proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, Senator Tydings (Senator Millard E. Tydings, Democrat, Maryland) made a speech today on the floor, in which he said that until strikes in defense industries are ended and non-military expenditures are cut, we could not consider anything more in the way of active participation in the war. Is there anything you could say to us about this?

THE PRESIDENT: Speaking on the floor is his privilege. That's his privilege. I couldn't comment.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to send up your St. Lawrence message tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether tomorrow. I think Thursday. I don't think the Senate meets until Thursday. I am not sure.

Q Mr. President, if I could phrase a previous question in a different way, do you think that the Government needs -- for defense projects --

the right to take over factories permanently?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have given it no consideration.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #747,
Executive Office of the President,
June 6, 1941 -- 11.05 A.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Sorry to be late.

MR. GODWIN: What?

THE PRESIDENT: Sorry to be late. I have been signing things that I had to get out of the way.

MR. GODWIN: Look at the scottie (novelty on the President's desk).

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have just signed the bill authorizing acquisition by the United States of title to, or for use of domestic -- for the use of domestic or idle foreign merchant vessels for urgent needs of commerce and national defense. It is being signed and a time put on it. And right afterwards I signed an Executive Order in connection with that, which will authorize the United States Maritime Commission to purchase, requisition, charter -- requisition the use of, or take over the title to, or possession of, any or all foreign merchant ships lying idle in the waters within the jurisdiction of the United States, including the Philippines and the Canal Zone.

Secondly, to operate any of them in the service of the United States, directly or through an agent. To charter or lease any of them in the service of the United States/or in any foreign -- or in any commerce, foreign or coast-wise, provided that no vessel shall be transferred, chartered or leased to a belligerent government without the approval of the President.

Third, to document them as desired under the laws of the United States, or any neutral country of the western hemisphere. Fourth, to make such other use as the President may direct. And, finally, the Commission is directed to determine and make, to the owner or owners of any vessel taken in accordance with the provisions hereof, just compensation for such vessel. I guess that's about all.

Q Would you tell us how many ships you anticipate getting?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no idea.

Q Or what ships are likely to be taken over?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Any idle ships.

Q What do you mean by time -- setting a time limit?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What do you mean when you say a time on it?

MR. GODWIN: You note the time when you signed it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Eleven A.M., Eastern Standard Time.

Q Today?

THE PRESIDENT: Today.

Q Sir, you spoke of any idle ships. Would they include French ships as well?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. FRED ESSARY: Mr. President, are you able to talk with us today about Governor Winant's mission and his report to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose that I can tell you practically everything there is. It is a two-fold mission. One was to report on

probably 25 or maybe 50 major topics -- major items -- relating to the conduct of the war in Great Britain, and the other was to obtain here information regarding 25 or perhaps 50 topics relating to the defense of the United States, to take back to the other side.

I can say this, Fred, and I think it is a perfectly fair thing to say -- that there are certain types -- I hate, as you know -- I hate to talk about newspapers and publicity, and I am not talking about all papers by any means -- I am talking about certain types of papers which -- in the columns of which there is a most amazing coincidence. I characterize it only as a coincidence, and I hope that that is a correct term to use.

It so happens that just about the time that Winant got here -- just before he got here -- I've got it in my basket -- I had two memoranda. Both of these memoranda relate directly to orders given out in Berlin, not to people in Germany or in Europe, but to nazis in the United States, including the various grades, you might say almost, those people who are in favor of appeasement in this country. These orders came from Germany. And I just happened last night -- in going through my basket -- to pick out a couple of them. Of course, naturally, I get pretty well -- I get a pretty good slant on what those orders are. They come from Germany to sympathizers with fascism or naziism in this country. I get them right along. Don't ask me how, but you can assume that I have a pretty darn good idea of what German propaganda is in this country in some detail.

These two particular ones related to two things which the

American nazis and fascists were asked to play up by Germany. The first was that Germany, of course, had no thought -- not the slightest thought in the world -- of ever doing anything against any country in the entire western hemisphere.

Well, just as an illustration of that, that is being carried by some papers, and was carried again this morning by the New York Times, for instance. And I suppose some other papers carried John Cudahy's article on his interview with Hitler.

Well, I thought that in regard to that -- probably as good an answer as could be written was the editorial in the same issue of this morning's New York Times (June 6, 1941), and I think that editorial is good enough for the press of this country to repeat, giving due credit, of course, to the New York Times. But it is a darn good statement of the value of German assurances over the past few years, and expresses the hope -- quite properly -- that there are a very large number of dupes in the United States. (See appendix for editorial.)

The other article is -- the other crder was extremely interesting -- but it said as soon as Winant gets here, spread the story around -- spread the story around, all through the United States, that he is bringing over a scarehead story that the British are just about all in. And secondly, spread the story around that Britain is talking peace.

Now that originated from Germany. And all you have to do is to read the coincidence of the stories, from a certain type of paper in the United States, to realize that there is the most amazing coincidence, and I think that's all that needs to be said about it --

it's just a fact. Oh, it doesn't make any difference. For instance -- this is off the record -- Ludwell Denny's story last night in the Scripps-Howard paper (holding up a copy of the New York World-Telegram for June 5, 1941) -- it might just as well have been written in Berlin. Only that is off the record.

MR. FRANK KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, haven't the British helped a little on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. FRANK KLUCKHOHN: I saw a statement by Sir Gerald Campbell, the new publicity chief, that Winant came to the White House to say Britain's position was very serious.

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute -- now wait a minute, Frank. You are only quoting one sentence. It's a little out of context. If you had copied the whole paragraph that that sentence occurred in, you would see that it is not fair to use just one sentence out of a paragraph.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, in order to nail this down, can you say definitely that Winant brought no peace proposal of any kind to your consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, on condition that you don't run it in the form that "the President denies," because that kind of a story is a vehicle for bringing out the falsehood. It's an old game. I would probably use it myself if I wanted to. (laughter) But that's all it is, it's just an old game -- "the President denied." Well, the President doesn't deny, the President accuses. That's a very different thing.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, to make sure that we have this very

important thing right, Jim Wright says he asked you if Winant brought a peace offer.

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely nothing like it.

MR. GODWIN: That has been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Not even a -- not even a tenth cousin of a peace offer, or anything like that, or any discussion of peace.

Q May we quote you, sir, on that?

THE PRESIDENT: On condition that you don't use -- in talking about it -- use it as a denial, but I use it as an accusation.

Q An accusation of what, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: An accusation of the duping of certain people in the United States by German propaganda, which was ordered from Germany. That is the easiest way of putting it.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, on the other item that you had there -- you had two items -- the story that Britain is all in ---

THE PRESIDENT: Huh?

MR. GODWIN: Would you care to say anything about that matter?

THE PRESIDENT: That's the same kind of German cloth.

Q Mr. President, would you have the stenographer read the direct quote which youhave authorized?

THE PRESIDENT: All right, Romagna.

(The reporter read back, "Not even a tenth cousin of a peace offer, or anything like that, or any discussion of peace." A newsman insisted the President said, "Absolutely nothing like it" which is true, but not in that sentence. See page 6 -- top of this page.)

THE PRESIDENT: Now, wait a minute now. The sentence goes on from

there -- "Absolutely nothing like it" comma -- not even a semicolon, because I have seen some people change a semicolon into a full stop (laughter) -- "provided you use this not as a denial by the President, but as an accusation by the President." (he laughs) That's darn hard for anything -- anybody to get away from. (laughter)

Q May we also use the 'tenth cousin'?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q May we also use the rest of the sentence?

MR. GODWIN: 'Not even a tenth cousin'?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, right along with that, there is a fairly good understanding -- whether it is erroneous or not -- that Great Britain has said that they were -- couldn't last more than a certain number of months without our help, and that's going around in the news.

THE PRESIDENT: That has never been said. Perhaps by Berlin.

MR. GODWIN: Well, it is --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That has never come from any responsible source, I can assure you of that.

MR. GODWIN: Would you have the editors kill such stories, such as John Cudahy's?

THE PRESIDENT: No, as long as they're accompanied by excellent editorials pointing out what the significance of it is. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, I think probably a good many people in the United States would be deeply shocked to hear that Germans can send orders to any great number of citizens in this country. Could you tell us, sir, about who sends these orders out, or to what branches or

agencies they go? How does this thing operate?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because if I did that, it might disclose how I get that information. It does come from -- I think they call it -- well, whatever that propaganda bureau is in Berlin -- its government.

VOICE: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (loudly) Wait a minute -- wait a minute -- I'm not through this time. (Loud laughter)

I have been getting, in the past week or ten days, some very wonderful resolutions, telegrams, letters of support, from labor organizations in the United States, and because of the volume of them, because they go down to small local unions, and from there all the way up to international unions, who haven't been thanked, but I haven't specified any of them because of the volume -- I would say, offhand, that -- oh, I must have had four or five hundred from labor organizations. And yesterday Daniel Tobin brought me in a letter which in effect was a resolution from the General Executive Board of the International Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers, which isso good that -- I won't read it to you -- I asked Steve (Mr. Early) to have it mimeographed for you, in the hope that you will use it as -- what might be called -- a sample of support which we have been getting from a great many labor organizations all through the country. And it isn't very long, but it is so well expressed that I thought it is a good sample to use on the support we are getting.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q The country would like to know what you are going to do with those organizations -- labor organizations -- who are not supporting you.

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any statement from the White House today.

Q Mr. President, isn't Mr. Tobin's union the one that has tied up Pittsburgh?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and he was leaving after I saw him yesterday morning, because one of his locals, one of warehousemen in New York City and the other was a small group in Pittsburgh, and he was leaving yesterday afternoon to try and go back to these two locals and get them back to work. He didn't hear it -- he didn't hear it himself until yesterday morning.

Q Mr. President, without trying to press you on this matter, there is a very serious situation, such as that in the North American strike, where an agreement was reached that there would be no strike.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right, and the Mediation Board is working on that, and the lumber thing, at this particular moment.

Q Well, are you giving thought to what can be done to bring about more responsibility on the part of the leaders, by these locals?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say probably the answer is Yes. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, did you mean to emphasize the word 'today'?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you heard me. (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

MR. GODWIN: Let me ask you one more question ---

Q (interposing) Statements have been made in Congress about the St. Lawrence Waterway, on the ground that the war would be over before it could be built. I wonder if you could tell us how many of the new battleships would have to be junked if we applied the same time limit?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess all of the ones that were authorized last year -- probably -- as a matter of fact on this St. Lawrence thing, according to the best timetable -- the best schedule that I have got, we could practically complete it just short of four years, practically complete it. But the Army engineers and the Canadian engineers have been working on a plan by which they could get lake-built merchant ships out of the St. Lawrence in two years.

Q Is there any particular new improvement at this moment with regard to the French, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, reports were published this morning that the Japanese Ambassador has held discussions with the Secretary of State on the possibility of a non-aggression or neutrality agreement between this country and Japan, and that the conversations were quite informal. Do you understand that to be the case, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about it. I know, of course, that the Japanese Ambassador sees the Secretary of State right along, but then he has been for a long time. I haven't heard anything about that.

Q Mr. President, there is one other matter I would ask you about, if I can. Certain states have laws that limit the working hours of labor. The California Manufacturers Association sent you a wire

about its work week and the State code and the limitations. I am informed that there are numerous states that have similar laws but have no emergency clauses in that. Has that been brought to your attention?

THE PRESIDENT: No. First I have heard of it.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

(loud laughter from the President as the newsmen file out)

ON MISUNDERSTANDING HITLER

(Editorial from the New York Times for June 6, 1941)

At the end of his interview with Mr. Cudahy in this morning's TIMES Adolf Hitler complains that he is always being misunderstood in the United States. "Time after time he has tried to emphasize that the position of Germany and his plans are not inimical to the United States, but his efforts have always proved futile."

They will always remain futile, unless we become a nation of dupes; for the utter worthlessness of Hitler's explanations and assurances and promises is written in his record. This is the man who solemnly declared that "Germany has neither the wish nor the intention to mix in internal Austrian affairs or to annex or unite with Austria"--and who then annexed it. This is the man who promised that once the Sudeten question was solved "there will be no further territorial problems in Europe for Germany"--and who then marched his army into Prague. This is the man who declared that an agreement of his own making with Poland would "bring about lasting and continuous pacification"--and who then fell upon and butchered and dismembered Poland. This is the man who gave the most explicit possible assurances that his plans were "not inimical" to Norway, to Denmark, to Holland and to Belgium--and who then robbed them of their freedom.

It is no news that his present plans are "not inimical" to the United States. He is always the best friend of the next nation on his list for plunder.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #748,
Executive Office of the President,
June 10, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'm yawning, and I had ten hours sleep last night.

MR. GODWIN: That's great.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: That's great.

MR. EARLY: (to Miss May Craig) You'll break your arm holding all that (newspapers, books, etc.) (Miss Craig smiled back.)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I asked Steve (Mr. Early) if he didn't have anything, and he said he was dry. After I lifted my eyebrows, he amended it and he says that the oasis was dry. (laughter) I don't think we have got anything at all.

MR. GODWIN: Heard anything on the Moor -- the Robin Moor?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nothing further. The ship that did the rescuing is not yet in.

Q Mr. President, in the oasis of news, is there anything about a judge for Puerto Rico? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (whistles a little) No, and Bob Jackson was in here just five minutes ago and I forgot to ask him. That's bad. Steve, will you remind me to ask him about a judge for Puerto Rico? (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, there are reports that Mr. Sayre (Francis B. Sayre, United States High Commissioner for the Philippines) may come back

from the Philippines and be replaced by another High Commissioner. Is there anything you can say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that's an old report -- year old, or something like that.

Q Mr. President, we understood that your conference this afternoon with Mr. Jackson and the others was on the west coast labor situation. Could you amplify that at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think the -- perhaps I could say this -- of course it is our desire in the case of that particular plant, or any others that may eventuate in the future, that they will be returned to private management as soon as it is possible.

Q Mr. President, have you taken actual legal possession of the plant, or is it simply a policing job?

THE PRESIDENT: I took action as President and not as a lawyer. We did talk about the question of the pay envelopes this week, and we are paying the regular scale, with the understanding, of course, that it had been arrived at out there before this mediation agreement was violated -- was that the -- whatever is decided on will be retroactive to the first of May. In other words, that is carrying out in good faith what had already been agreed on. The Mediation Board, or a panel thereof, will resume mediation to try to work out an agreement, just as soon as they possibly can.

MR. GODWIN: Are the pay envelopes the company's money? You see, we are -- you gave me the impression that the Army or the Government was handling the pay envelopes. Is that ---

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I frankly -- I couldn't tell you.

MR. GODWIN: You don't know about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the same people will get out the checks as they have done them before. Whether regularly charged to Government account and reimbursed afterwards, or whether paid out by the company and arrangements made with the Government afterwards, is beyond me.

MR. GODWIN: Well, your information was simply on the rate of pay?

THE PRESIDENT: That's it.

Q Mr. President, in these further efforts to work out an agreement, are they going to continue to bargain with the C.I.O.?

THE PRESIDENT: With Mr. Frankensteen. (Richard T. Frankensteen, National Director of the Aviation Division of the U.A.W.)

Q I see.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But not with the people who were ousted from the local union -- but the international union.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you spoke of the possibility that other situations like this might eventuate. Do you have any in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We hope not.

MR. GODWIN: Well, you have the Aluminum ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, that is in the hands of the Mediation Board. They have made no recommendation or report yet.

Q Mr. President, what is the situation on the Pacific machinists' strike in the ---

THE PRESIDENT: In the Bay district? Mr. Brown (Harvey W. Brown, President, International Machinists, A.F.L.) was in yesterday, and he has called -- the first opportunity he could get them

over to Chicago was Thursday Morning -- the Executive Committee of the International Machinists.

Q (interposing) In Washington, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And he is going to ask them for authority to order the machinists --- those 1500 or 1700 --- back to work.

MR. EARLY: That meeting takes place ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. EARLY: That meeting takes place in Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it will. Steve (Mr. Early) says the meeting will take place here in Washington.

Q Well, there are some C.I.O. people also involved in that strike, are there not?

THE PRESIDENT: I think not.

Q Some C.I.O. machinists?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, reports that troops are being readied at Fort Niagara for movement to Cleveland -- anything to that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, never heard of it. Maybe they are headed for Newfoundland. Lots of places you can send them to.

Q Mr. President, a report has come in from Lisbon that the Government of Portugal has delivered formal protest to the United States, with respect to your broadcast on May 27, concerning the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's just a report.

Q I beg pardon, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's just a report. I don't think any such communication has come in, or will come in, because there is

nothing to protest against. I am sure -- I am sure that is just a wild rumor.

Q It is an Associated Press dispatch, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Who is that? Somebody from United Press that asked that? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Oh.

Q (softly) Yes, sir.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, if a strike ends before the strikers are reclassified and actually inducted into service -- under the ruling made yesterday by the Selective Service Headquarters -- will those men be reclassified and permitted to go back?

THE PRESIDENT: In the first place, it's very 'iffy', and in the second place, I couldn't answer because I don't know.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Nobody ever thought of that until you, Pete. I'll find out.

Q Mr. President, as a general matter of policy, do the employees jeopardize their requests for higher wages by forcing the Government to take over the plant?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That's another one of those things that is so general you couldn't possibly answer it. It depends on cases. Everything depends on cases. And there are other factors which I don't think you mentioned. (he laughs)

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: Mr. President, has any consideration been given to taking over the American Potash and Chemical Corporation, where there has been a strike since March?

THE PRESIDENT: May be a very good corporation, but I never heard of it.

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: There were some reports that you had told the Cabinet the other day that they would be next.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of them, so the report isn't exactly based on fact. (he laughs)

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, can you tell us your views on ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What do they make?

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: They make borax and boric acid, very essential to optical glass, I understand. The only main source of supply in the world.

THE PRESIDENT: Where do they live?

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: Trona, California.

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of them.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, can you tell us your views on specific legislation authorizing you to do what you did at the North American? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so, Pete. I think that things are going along pretty well.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #749,
Executive Offices of the President,
June 17, 1941, 4.05 P.M., E.S.T.

(Press Conference was not held June 13, due to minor illness of the President)

THE PRESIDENT: (To Miss May Craig) May -- May -- you come here afterwards and I will -- I will give you an answer to something you asked me about the other day, but I can't tell anybody else.

MISS MAY CRAIG: All right.

MR. GODWIN: Mm mm! (the President laughs)

Q What did she ask about the other day?

Q Advice to girls. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Advice to girls.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right, too. (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: This is the wrong side of the house. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What is the male of Dorothy Dix?

Q There's a big debate about that. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, there's a big debate about that.

Q (softly) Little Steve. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (To Mr. Godwin) Did you ever know the old girl?

MR. GODWIN: I never knew Dorothy Dix.

THE PRESIDENT: She's grand -- a grand old girl.

MR. GODWIN: Look what your office is doing. Look at this date. It's now July -- June 17th.

THE PRESIDENT: What? -- June 21 -- what do you mean?

MR. GODWIN: A little ahead of time. (indicating) No, that's June 21st.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, all right. I never bother about that -- dates. (he laughs)

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't this Bunker Hill Day, or something like that?

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Huh?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Steve (Mr. Early) tried hard to think of something, and he can't find anything. I haven't got a thing.

Q Mr. President, there has been a crime wave in the District of Columbia, of which you are more or less the Mayor. Is there anything that you can say about that, or any recommendations?

THE PRESIDENT: What about it, Earl? (Earl Godwin)

MR. GODWIN: Well, there are 25 policemen watching these picketers out in front of the White House that might have been watching garages.

THE PRESIDENT: No, it's too bad.

MR. GODWIN: Well, we haven't got enough policemen. I don't know whether that would stop crime or not.

Q Mr. President, there is the matter of a Puerto Rico Supreme Court Judge. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What is the connotation between these two questions? (laughter)

Q I think there ought to be more Supreme Court Judges. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: More what?

Q Supreme Court Judges.

THE PRESIDENT: Supreme Court Judges?

Q Mr. President, would it be proper to ask why -- if and why the Marine Corps' leave had been canceled?

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't know it had.

Q Mr. President, could you comment on the fact that Secretary Ickes yesterday stopped this shipment of oil from the Philadelphia port? Does that have any --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I don't think it means anything. Just pending further determination.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) From an east coast port, not a west coast port.

Q Excuse me.

Q Mr. President, there is no plan to hold up west coast shipments?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Or a complete embargo, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Some days ago Lieutenant General McNair (Lesley J. McNair) gave us a talk on the forthcoming maneuvers of the Army this summer, and in that there were several notations with reference to National Guard troops, putting them in various localities, in case they are retained in the Federal service beyond the year for which they were called. Is it possible now for you to tell us whether they are considering retaining them or not?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. The Secretary of War told me about -- I think it was yesterday -- the thing is under study, and will have a report for me very shortly.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the Robin Moor incident?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nothing further. --

Q (interposing) Have you received --

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Today.

Q Have you, sir, received the report today from the State Department that

was brought up from Brazil?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, a summary of it. I haven't seen the actual documents yet. I expect to later on.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us how much longer Justice Byrnes is likely to continue serving in the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment about the letter that Representative Lea (Representative Clarence F. Lea, Democrat, California) sent with regard to moving of the Interstate Commerce Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I wish you people would find out where that originated -- in other words, the story that was taken to the committee. Somebody told the committee that the I.C.C. was to be moved. And where -- where -- why they acted on that without any further checkup on it, I don't know. Of course, we are making a study, as you know, for taking care of a lot more people who are going to come to Washington, probably in the course of the next year, and it becomes a question as to whether some bureaus, or commissions, or agencies will have to be moved out. There has been no determination on any individual unit, or agency, or bureau, or commission -- absolutely not. In other words, we have not even -- we have not seriously begun the study of it yet. Who picked on the poor old I.C.C. I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Well, the I.C.C. laws, as I understand it, sir, designate Washington, D.C., or the District of Columbia, as their headquarters.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it does.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) And that would have to be done by an Act of Congress. Am I right about that?

Q Charles F. Palmer, Division of Defense Housing Coordination, issued a

statement saying that somebody had to be moved out as there were no facilities here.

THE PRESIDENT: That probably -- we are afraid that that is true.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But absolutely we have not really undertaken the study as to what should go out.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us about some of the improper activities in which the German consuls in this country have been engaged?

THE PRESIDENT: Not any further than that they were of a subversive character.

Q Relating to sabotage?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Relating to sabotage?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say the word 'subversive' included a great many sins.

Q Sir, would you -- may I ask you if this is news -- new to you -- I mean the knowledge of these subversive characters?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say -- I would use the word 'cumulative'.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Mr. President, would it be warranted speculation on any association between the consular activities and the strike situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think that anybody but a columnist is entitled to speculate. (he laughs) I told you that before. We newspapermen -- we don't speculate. (he laughs again)

Q Mr. President, there have been charges made that certain other consuls -- and countries have been -- also been engaged in doubtful activities.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there isn't any news on that today.

Q Would you emphasize 'today'?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) The same old answer -- You heard me.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us approximately the size of the new lend-lease appropriation that is pending?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think they have made up the totals yet, -- (interposing)
Q/ Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- and probably it will be some time off.

Q Mr. President, as a result of this sinking of the Robin Moor, are you giving any consideration to the possibility of requesting authorization to arm merchant ships to protect themselves?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Of course, that is -- I suppose every -- every chief of naval operations has had a plan of the arming of merchant ships -- if and when called on to do it -- in the safe ever since 1918, at the end of the war.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Well, have they come out of the safe yet?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have they come out of the safe yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at my request.

Q Do you need any authorization, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I really don't know.

Q Mr. President, there are 24 candidates for the Senate in Texas to succeed Morris Sheppard, and at least 18 claim Administration support. Would you care to say anything further on that subject, more than you have already said?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I thought I did rather a good job when I answered that question the first time. Were you there that day?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, don't you think I did a good job?

Q I think you did at that time, but there were some editorial comments since then --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, that again is a case --

Q (continuing) -- expressing the hope that you would clarify your stand.

THE PRESIDENT: That again is over-speculation. Now if you would just run that story, you could even get Romagna and have it quoted for you. It was pretty clear when I said it. I am not adding to it or detracting from it. I think it is very clear what my intention was.

Q Mr. President, do you concur in the statement of your Secretary of the Navy last night that America is now at its hour of decision in following the course that Canada has followed?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe in the Ten Commandments too. (he laughs)

Q Is this the eleventh?

(pause here)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

(the President laughs)

MISS MAY CRAIG TO MR. GODWIN: Where were you?

MR. GODWIN: I had a question --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They jumped the gun on you.

(Miss May Craig conferred with the President)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #750,
Executive Offices of the President,
June 24, 1941 -- 4.00 P.M., E.S.T.

(Press Conference for June 20, 1941, was not held, due to minor illness of the President)

MR. GODWIN: I had to show my card to get in.

THE PRESIDENT: You did?

MR. GODWIN: Did you ever see a press card? (handing his to the President) You had better get one.

THE PRESIDENT: First one I ever looked at. Oh, what's that? (sprig of balsam placed on the President's desk by Miss May Craig)

Q A forget-me-not.

THE PRESIDENT: Very nice, very nice. I wish they would grow in this climate. Campobello balsam. Real balsam.

(To Mr. Godwin, referring to the press card) They didn't ask you to show it?

MR. GODWIN: Yes, an awful lot of visitors come in. They make everybody comply, every now and then.

THE PRESIDENT: Mm mm -- mm mm. It would be a joke if we picked up an anarchist by mistake. (laughter)

Q Mr. Godwin is a subversive influence.

Q We have been checking up on God (Mr. Godwin) for some time.

THE PRESIDENT: May (Miss May Craig) how is that N. Y. A. thing going on? Pretty well?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Swell.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it good? Is it really?

MISS MAY CRAIG: A democratic state.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know why everybody's coming in. I haven't got any news today.

Q It's a smaller crowd than usual. They are checking them as they come in.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, have you been fingerprinted -- everybody coming in? I don't think I have got anything.

Q Mr. President, the Governor of Kentucky says you are going to dedicate Mammoth Cave National Park at a date that you select. Have you selected any date?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Some time off.

Q Mr. President, there has been a recent request from Britain for American volunteers to a civilian technical corps -- mechanics to serve as radio detectors. Has that come to your attention?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I have got something on it, somewhere. It came in this morning. (picks up and looks through his work-basket) Well, it is not -- apparently is not established for Americans, because it was established over there by the Prime Minister and Lord Beaverbrook, and announcements were made over there and in the British Embassy here sometime ago. It is a civilian technical corps. The British authorities hope that American mechanics will enroll. Such mechanics as do enroll will be returned to this country, if the need for their services arises. Full information could be obtained from the British Consulate General at 25 Broadway, New York City. Trained mechanics to perform no combatant functions, but will be engaged in repairing and serving technical equipment, including mechanical devices recently developed by the British for locating approaching planes. A great need for additional trained mechanics over there, I take it, largely in view of new designs and new equipment, new instruments --

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how is that handled under the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: How does it come under the Neutrality Act?

Q Doesn't the Neutrality Act have prohibitions against Americans visiting belligerent territory except in special cases?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, anybody can go into a belligerent territory, at their own risk, of course. You can't -- you can't take the oath of allegiance to a foreign government, and you can't be recruited -- solicited for the army or the navy of a foreign government in this country. But you can enlist -- as I have said many times before -- you can enlist, or can be enlisted -- in Canada, for example, and become a part of the armed forces, if you want to, of Canada or Great Britain, so long as you don't take allegiance to the King. I understand that they are not requiring the oath of allegiance to the King, so it's completely legal.

Q The same is true in China, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Are you in favor, sir, of encouraging this sort of enlistment?

THE PRESIDENT: Very much. I think Great Britain needs these people very much -- just the same way that quite a number of doctors and a great many nurses have already gone to the other side.

Q You also include in that, sir -- you also include that you favor enlistment in the armed forces?

THE PRESIDENT: Any boy that wants to go has a perfect right to go, so long as he is not recruited in this country.

Q Mr. President, would these mechanics include ground crews for planes?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about what a ground crew for a plane is.

I suppose they are mechanics. In other words, all mechanics are not members of ground crews, but I suppose most members of ground crews are mechanics.

Q If not, it would cover them if they were mechanics?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so.

Q Mr. President, will these be exempt from the Draft?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, what is the status of price-control legislation proposals?

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, you got me there. I had meant to ask today, and I have done nothing about it.

Q What about this reorganization of O.P.M. we hear about?

THE PRESIDENT: The first I knew about it was in the papers this afternoon.

Q Mr. President, the Treasury apparently is releasing $40,000,000. in frozen Russian assets.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will they be permitted to get export licenses to buy things with?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you any news or any interesting comment to make following Mr. Welles' (Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles) statement yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think that covers it pretty well. Of course we are going to give all the aid that we possibly can to Russia. We have not yet received any specific list of things, and of course people must realize that when we get a list it will be probably a list of such character that you can't just go round to Mr. Garfinckel's and fill the order and take it away with you. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: How about Thompson's Dairy?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What kind of things shall we give them, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, socks and shoes, and things like that. What you can get at Garfinckel's you can probably get at once. That is the easiest way of putting it. When it comes to planes and things that have to be made, we have got orders that will take a long time to fill, of course. Now on the deliveries of those orders, nothing could be changed, of course, except by agreement.

MR. GODWIN: At the time Mr. Welles made his statement, I think he also included the statement that we had not heard anything from the Russian government?

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly true.

MR. GODWIN: Have you got a list now? Have you had any --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

MR. GODWIN: Have you had any official --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Absolutely nothing. We have had no request.

MR. GODWIN: What about the list?

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't got anything at all. Nothing is coming through. Just like the average newspaper office at this minute. They get no news from the other side. Neither am I.

MR. GODWIN: Where did you get this list? Maybe I misunderstood.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I said we couldn't do anything without a list.

MR. GODWIN: I beg your pardon.

Q Will any priorities on airplanes be assigned Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, is it general policy that comes under lease -- any aid

we could give comes under lease-lend?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I probably know less about the situation on the fighting front in Moscow than the average desk man does, at this particular moment.

Q Mr. President, is the defense of Russia essential to the defense of the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, ask me a different type of question. You know I never answer those. I would generally say "How old is Ann?" or something like that.

Q Mr. President, one thing the Russians have been pressing for consistently is machine tools. They have been planning to get licenses for those. Could you tell us anything about what the situation is on those requests?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, but my impression is that certain orders which they had here, for certain types of machine tools, were filled and delivered; and that certain very large machine tools -- this is a long time ago -- I mean this is way back last -- early in the fall -- nearly a year ago -- certain very large tools -- one or two of those shipments involved were held up and used by us, because we needed them at the moment. Now what has happened since then, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, General Maxwell (Brigadier General Russell L. Maxwell, Administrator, Export Control (National Defense) said yesterday that there would be no change in our attitude on the issuing of export licenses to Russia, until a statement of policy concerning such licenses was made by you in a formal statement.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you think, instead of answering hypothetical questions

on the part of anybody, it would be best to find out what they want? I think that is more practical.

Q (interposing) Well, they have --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) What we do before we know what would be asked to send, that is our situation today. We haven't got the foggiest idea. We will not cross that bridge until we come to it.

Q Do you plan, sir, to see Mr. Oumansky at all tomorrow? (Constantine A. Oumansky, Ambassador, U.S.S.R.)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe he knows any better than I do.

Q Mr. President, there have been reports that Colonel Donovan has been given a high position in the military intelligence, or will be given.

THE PRESIDENT: I read that, too, in the paper. I have had nothing come to my desk on it.

Q Mr. President, has anything come to your desk about keeping Selectees in service, more in service?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have got a report coming from the War Department, but it hadn't arrived last night.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #751,
Held in the President's Study at Hyde Park, N. Y.,
June 27, 1941 -- 11.40 A.M., E.D.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's all there is. (Next Monday's story on the dedication of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library) We are not having any broadcasting because it is so short and simple.

Q How long will it last, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: About fifteen minutes.

Q That's the whole program, rather than your speech?

THE PRESIDENT: About five minutes. (meaning speech) Little less. Mine will probably be less. I don't think I know anything at all.

Q Do you think you will be in Washington on the Fourth?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the faintest idea. Somebody said it was supposed to be unusual. Hasn't anybody been in Washington on the Fourth?

Q Not if they can help it, Mr. President. (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What is that famous fellow -- you ought to know. He is quite a saint to all the Italians, who fire off fireworks all the time. This is off the record.

Q Rocco.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. When I was Governor of this State -- laughter) -- there was -- he had a -- he had a birthday two or three times a year. (laughter) Perfectly incorrigible. Right close to the executive Mansion, and every time that Rocco came along, each church -- there were one or two churches quite near -- got up a special celebration for him, and they were firing off these great big bombs in the park --

which is about a block from the Executive Mansion -- keeping us awake till three o'clock in the morning -- and the poor old bishop of the diocese he had no effect, because financially the churches were in a hole all the time; they had to be helped out by the diocese -- they were shooting off all their money in fireworks. (laughter)

This is all off the record, but I think on the Fourth of July it isn't a patch on this old fellow Rocco. (he laughs)

MR. HASSETT: You know, we came up on the other side, one day last summer -- one evening, and it was on the river bank down here. It was --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, yes. Great display. It was on St. Peter's. That's on St. Peter's.

MR. HASSETT: Sure enough the papers were full of it next day. It was Saint Rocco's again.

THE PRESIDENT: Just see to it that we don't pass Poughkeepsie on St. Rocco's Day. (laughter)

Q Some governments are spending incomes about the same way, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, some columnist says that the five-billion-dollar lend-lease bill is coming through into Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know about it.

Q Is the new ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I suppose if he lives long enough it will be true.

Q Isn't the figure about right?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the faintest idea. I haven't had anything from the Budget yet.

Q About how long would he have to live?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q About how long would he have to live?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the faintest idea on that.

Q Mr. President, you had a visit the other day from some Irish legislators, who said they came down to see you about the Irish food situation. We questioned them about the possibility of sending arms which the Irish government has asked for, we understood. Is there anything that you can tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. That is not the -- you know -- you remember, as I said before, we didn't have any arms available. There just plain weren't any. I said, however, I would look into the question of rifles, but that I didn't think there was any ammunition to go with it, because we are way behind on ammunition. Cartridges. So I am having the thing looked into. Now, of course, coming to the other question, the -- some fairly definite assurance that they will defend themselves against any German attack.

Q Have you received any such assurances, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Mr. President, have we taken up officially with the Irish the question of bases?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Never.

Q There has been a lot written about it.

THE PRESIDENT: I am quite sure that there has been nothing said by the British about a seizure of bases in Ireland.

Q Mr. President, how about -- aren't the Irish hedging around again?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Aren't the Irish changing their views a bit, in view of what is happening

in other parts of Europe?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. How should I know? (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, the original ships which you offered to them, they haven't actually cleared from this country have they?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Have they been loaded, do you know?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. As I understand it they leased two and bought one.

Q I understood it was to loan one, and the other two were chartered or leased.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I don't know what has happened to them.

Q Mr. President, anything new on this price-control legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a thing.

Q Have you heard, sir, from Mr. Sumner Welles, on the background of his conference yesterday with Mr. Oumansky? (Constantine A. Oumansky, Ambassador from the U. S. S. R.)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't talked to him yet. I just got down here. (meaning to the Study)

Q Do you expect to talk to him on the subject today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I will probably talk to him.

Q How about Mr. Hull?

THE PRESIDENT: He is down at White Sulphur Springs. No, I will probably talk to Sumner around quarter to one, just before lunch.

Q Mr. President, the communist press in New York says that your policy on aid to Russia is half-hearted. Welles was asked for comment yesterday, and he referred all questions to you. Is there anything you want to say on this?

THE PRESIDENT: I refer them all to you. (laughter) Now you are completely answered. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, Congress still seems to be kicking this May labor 'cooling-off' bill around. Have you any new ideas?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word about it since -- in weeks.

Q Mr. President, to come back to this Irish matter, you said you were looking into the question of sending rifles. Is it possible there might be some put in these ships that are now ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, oh no.

Q Not as soon as that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. The only reason I said rifles was that -- my reason was that the actual processing of rifles is getting on pretty well. Now, whether we are up to the point where we have any reserve or not, I don't know, but I am reasonably certain that we are way behind on ammunition. We haven't got enough for ourselves.

Q How does that happen, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Why is it, in that particular field, that we are way behind?

THE PRESIDENT: Because we had to build new ammunition plants. That was not the case with rifles. Very few.

Q The Irish group, sir, wanted arms considerably in excess of just plain rifles though, didn't they, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't anything. When was it that the Minister and Mr. Aiken came in? A long time ago.

Q A month ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they wanted all kinds of things, and of course we haven't got them ourselves.

Q Have you made any decision, sir, as to whether the aid that we can give to Russia will come under the lend-lease program, or what it will be?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any more ideas than I had the other day.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Mr. President, there are two local situations that suggest themselves -- er -- particularly with reference to materials and so forth.

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) How, by the way, is the new consolidation working out?

MR. J. EMSLEY: It's swell, so far.

THE PRESIDENT: Grand, grand. They keep most of the staff on?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Yes, sir, they do.

THE PRESIDENT: Fine, fine.

MR. J. EMSLEY: There was definite assurance of security in that connection.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. How is the plant of the new building coming on?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Very nicely, it should be started very shortly now, and it is a nice building, of course, as you know.

THE PRESIDENT: Awfully nice. Mr. Cook sent me a picture of it -- Speidel sent me a picture.

MR. J. EMSLEY: We are pleased to see that it conforms with the architecture.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, you know, I came back with another suggestion, that was that they should take up with the city fathers the building of a decent city hall.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Oh.

THE PRESIDENT: Right across on the west side of the same plaza.

MR. J. EMSLEY: And that probably ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. J. EMSLEY: May I use that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been at it for twenty years. I hope I live long enough to get a decent city hall in Poughkeepsie.

MR. J. EMSLEY: In that connection, sir, the old post office -- (the President laughs) -- what do you suppose we could do with that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I couldn't tell you, offhand. I haven't heard about it for six months. The city wanted it about quarter-price and under the law they could only get it at half-price, something like that.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Uh huh.

(the President laughs)

MR. J. EMSLEY: It is probable that some eventual use will be found for it. There was one suggestion at one time for a county -- for a Federal court set up there, but apparently the Department of the Interior which had the matter in hand, I believe, hadn't found any definite plan for it.

THE PRESIDENT: There wasn't enough Federal court business -- wasn't enough to justify it.

MR. J. EMSLEY: No. There was one suggestion that they merge Federal offices in this area.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Of course, I would assume that there will be some use found for it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, it's a good substantial building, it isn't awfully good architecturally, but it will last a good many years more.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It will be used, all right.

MR. J. EMSLEY: May I indulge for one moment on this cannon factory below

Poughkeepsie. Of course, they are going ahead. They have reconditioned the old plant, and that is small, of course, and they are going ahead with the foundation structure of the new big plant. Of course they are short of steel, and they have had best priority, but Louis Swenson, the contractor, says that they would like some help on getting that steel. (the President laughs) I suppose there is nothing you can ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Which plant is it, which old plant?

MR. J. EMSLEY: The old Delapenha plant. (the R. U. Delapenha & Co. plant, South Road)

THE PRESIDENT: The old Delapenha plant?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Yes. It is the place they have reconditioned, and they are going ahead, probably after July first. But in the meantime, they are building that huge plant which is one hundred thousand square feet of space, and that plant of course will need a lot of it. Of course, I suppose it is like everything else, they have to wait for steel like everybody else.

THE PRESIDENT: They haven't done anything with the old Moline (Moline Plow Company) plant. They have gone ahead with the plans for the sewage disposal. Did they publish my letter?

MR. J. EMSLEY: I didn't see it. You mean the recent one?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, to the city engineer.

MR. J. EMSLEY: No.

THE PRESIDENT: Get it! (laughter) It's hot! (more laughter)

MR. J. EMSLEY: Is that right? (the President laughs, then they all laugh)

Q Are we getting as much national news out of this conference as we are local?

THE PRESIDENT: (he laughs)

Q Have you heard anything about a new Japanese attitude?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a thing.

No, really, on this sewage disposal thing, the -- I think you and the other fellows will be interested in this. About twenty -- what is this? -- 21 -- 21 -- about thirty years ago -- I guess when I was up in the State senate -- I called attention to the fact that the city of Poughkeepsie -- which is a bit smaller than it is now, 35,000 people even then -- was dumping raw sewage into the Hudson river, which is a tide river. In other words, it flows both ways up and down, and then up and then down, four times a day, to a point about a mile from the intake of the water supply of the community.

And I suggested a sewage disposal plant. And nothing was done, and we had a succession of city administrations and mayors of both parties, etc. They did a lot of things, but they still continued, and still continue -- you people at the Nelson House, you are still drinking water out of the Hudson river, just one mile from the place that raw sewage goes into the same river. (laughter)

MR. J. EMSLEY: We are taking steps ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) This is rough stuff on my own county town.

Am I right?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Right.

THE PRESIDENT: But it's true. Oh, I suppose it is safe from the point of view of health, because the water is about one-quarter chlorine to three-quarters water. (he laughs) And that's what you all live on when you are in Poughkeepsie. (laughter) Perhaps that statement -- (loud laughter breaks off his sentence, and he slaps his hand on the desk) Therein lies an excuse. What about it? (he laughs) Everybody

looks at everybody else. (he laughs again)

Q Perfect alibi now!

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. Well, as you know, since the period from 1933 on, to about a year ago, when any community was a very useful project of that county, you could get not only W.P.A. Federal funds but also P.W.A. Federal funds on a forty-sixty matching basis, and I pleaded with Poughkeepsie to take advantage of it and put in a sewage disposal plant. Well, the time was up. The last we had was a year ago last January, had they been started by that time. And they did nothing about it.

At this particular time, when as you know we are trying to avoid, on account of the defense program, and infinitely greater employment all over the country -- we are trying to avoid all over the country building public works that can be deferred, put those public works that can be deferred into -- it might be called a 'kitty' -- a pool from which we can draw when this defense program is over, so that it won't be a tremendous let-down, under which we can transfer people who stop being employed on defense things, and put them on certain very essential but deferred public works.

Well, it just so happened at that particular time, the dear city of Poughkeepsie decided to go ahead and do the sewage disposal, after nearly thirty years discussion of it.

And I wrote to the city fathers in Poughkeepsie and told them that, in view of the thirty years delay, I thought they might wait another year or two, and if it was something that was -- that was brand new, it might be very essential, but people got along drinking this stuff for thirty years. (laughter) And er -- er -- I thought they

might go another year or two. So that's the story on the city of Poughkeepsie. (laughter)

Q Quite a chlorine shortage.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You have got quite a chlorine shortage now. It is important in defense, they say.

THE PRESIDENT: Shortage in chlorine? Well, where are you fellows going to move to? (he laughs)

MR. J. EMSLEY: I thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: You brought it on yourself. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you still hope to get up to Quonset Point sometime this summer, to look over the bases?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any idea. I would like to get off where it is a little cooler than around this neck of the woods. I haven't got any plans.

Q Mr. President, on all these requests for aid from various countries, they all run into this situation that the production yet -- hasn't yet reached its peak. How long do you think it is going to take, sir, before we are really turning out things in tremendous volume?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask somebody that has got the agreement and wants to show you that. You can't use a glittering generalization on a program of that kind. Some things are at peak, some things are coming to peak, some things will come along to peak, and six or eight of those things won't come to peak for another year. You can't answer those questions only in a general way. It depends on the particular article.

Q As a general proposition, Mr. President, are you satisfied with the

management of the defense effort?

THE PRESIDENT: That is another glittering generality. Some things -- yes; some things -- no.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Fine.

MR. DURNO: Back to one quarter chlorine and three quarters water!

THE PRESIDENT: Thank God at last I have given you all an alibi.

Q Do we need it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

VOICE: Good-bye, Mr. President.

VOICE: Thank you.